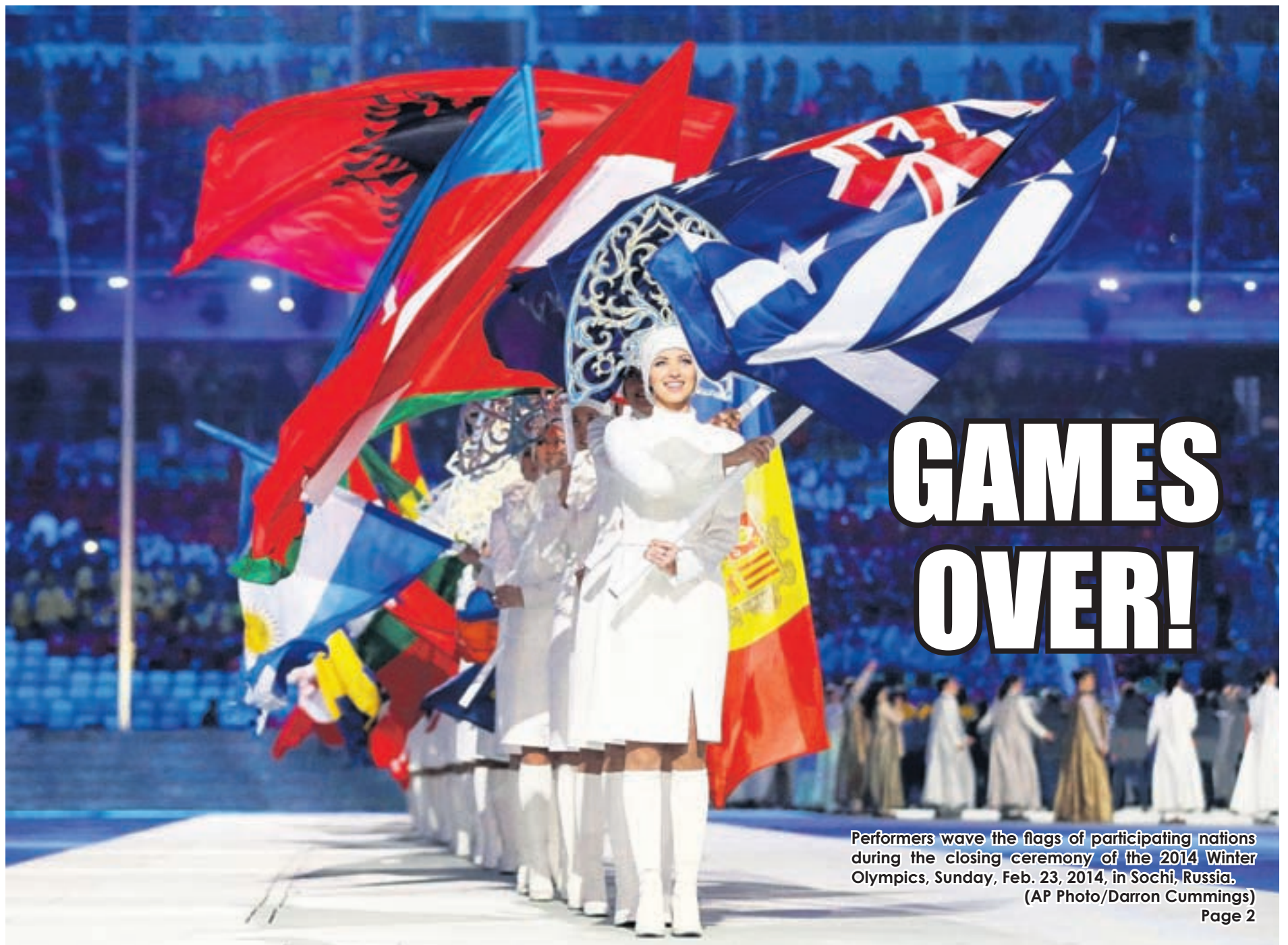


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Costly, Political, Successful: Sochi Olympics End



CARNAVAL 2014 TIVOLI LIGHTING PARADE A BIG SHINING SUCCESS!

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Opposition, pro-government rallies grip Venezuela

**FABIOLA SANCHEZ
JOSHUA GOODMAN
Associated Press
CARACAS, Venezuela (AP)**

— Venezuelans on both sides of the nation's bitter political divide took to the streets this weekend after two weeks of mass protests that have President Nicolas Maduro scrambling to squash an increasingly militant opposition movement. In Caracas, tens of thousands of opponents of the president filled several city blocks in their biggest rally to date against his 10-month-old government. Across town, at the presidential palace, Maduro addressed a much-smaller crowd of mostly female supporters dressed in the red of his socialist party. The dueling protests capped a violent week in which the government jailed Leopoldo Lopez, a fiery hard-liner who roused the opposition following its defeat in December's mayoral elections, and dozens of other student ac-

tivists. The violence has left at least 10 people dead on both sides and injured more than 100.

A few small clashes that erupted between government opponents and state

security forces after the opposition rally broke up were visually impressive, but resulted in only five injuries.

In a pattern seen in past demonstrations, dozens of stragglers erected bar-

ricades of trash and other debris and threw rocks and bottles at police and National Guardsmen. Troops responded with volleys of tear gas and rubber bullets to prevent the students

from reaching a highway. There were also clashes in San Cristobal, a remote city on the western border with Colombia that has seen some of the worst violence, but most opposition marches across the country ended peacefully.

The protests claimed their 10th fatality, when a 23-year-old student in the provincial city of Valencia was pronounced dead Saturday after an eight-hour surgery for brain injuries suffered at a demonstration earlier in the week. Geraldine Moreno was near her home on Wednesday, watching students defend a barricade at the corner of her street, when six national guardsmen rushed in and fired rubber bullets at close range, hitting her in the face, El Universal newspaper reported. On Saturday at the opposition rally held in wealthier eastern Caracas, two-time presidential candidate Henrique Capriles urged supporters to keep pressuring the government to resolve problems afflicting the oil-rich nation, from rampant crime to galloping 56 percent inflation.

"If you (Maduro) can't, then it's time to go," Capriles told the crowd. Capriles, 41, has frequently criticized Lopez's strategy of taking to the streets without building support among the poor. Those differences were on display again Saturday, when he told supporters that unrest in middle-class neighborhoods distracts people's attention from the country's mounting woes and only strengthens the government's hand.

It's unclear whether the street protests can maintain their momentum with fatigue setting in, the Carnival holiday approaching and no Kiev-like ousting of Maduro in sight.

Even if the protests fizzle out, the underlying frustrations that sparked them show no sign of easing: high crime, food shortages and inflation that erodes living standards in a country with the world's biggest oil reserves. □



Venezuela's President Nicolas Maduro, right, and his wife First Lady Celia Flores wave to supporters during a rally with elderly people in Caracas, Venezuela, Sunday, Feb. 23, 2014. Maduro has been scrambling to squash an increasingly militant opposition movement after two weeks of anti-government protests against crime and inflation.

(AP Photo/Rodrigo Abd)

Costly, Political, Successful: Sochi Olympics End

**JOHN LEICESTER
AP Sports Writer
SOCHI, Russia (AP)**

Flushed with pride after its athletes' spectacular showing at the costliest Olympics ever, Russia celebrated Sunday night with a visually stunning finale that handed off a smooth but politically charged Winter Games to their next host, Pyeongchang in South Korea.

Russian President Vladimir Putin, these Olympics' political architect and booster-in-chief, watched and smiled as Sochi gave itself a giant pat on the back for a Winter Games that IOC President Thomas Bach declared an "extraordinary success."

The crowd that partied in Fisht Olympic Stadium, in high spirits after the high-security games passed safely without feared terror attacks, hooted with delight when Bach said Russia delivered on promises of "excellent" venues, "outstanding" accommodation for

the 2,856 athletes and "impeccable organization." The spectators let out an audibly sad moan when Bach declared the 17-day Winter Games closed.

"We leave as friends of the Russian people," Bach said.

town on the Black Sea into a household name. All-new facilities, unthinkable in the Soviet era of drab shoddiness, showcased how far Russia has come in the two decades since it turned its back on communism. But

Despite the bumps along the way, Bach was unrelentingly upbeat about his first games as IOC president and the nation that hosted it. One of Sochi's big successes was security. Feared attacks by Islamic militants who threatened to target the games didn't materialize.

"It's amazing what has happened here," Bach said a few hours before the ceremony. He recalled that Sochi was an "old, Stalinist-style sanatorium city" when he visited for the IOC in the 1990s.

Dmitry Chernyshenko, head of the Sochi organizing committee, called the games "a moment to cherish and pass on to the next generations." "This," he said, "is the new face of Russia — our Russia."

"Now we can see our country is very friendly," said Boris Kozikov of St. Petersburg, Russia. "This is very important for other countries around the world to see." □



The Olympic Rings are silhouetted as fireworks light up the sky during the closing ceremonies at the 2014 Sochi Winter Olympics on Sunday, Feb. 23, 2014, in Sochi, Russia.

(AP Photo/The Canadian Press, Nathan Denette)

The nation's \$51 billion investment — topping even Beijing's estimated \$40 billion layout for the 2008 Summer Games — transformed a decaying resort

town on the Black Sea into a household name. All-new facilities, unthinkable in the Soviet era of drab shoddiness, showcased how far Russia has come in the two decades since it turned its back on communism. But

Faulty pipe led to US mall carbon monoxide leak



First responders stand outside Panera Bread's store at the Walt Whitman Mall in Huntington Long Island, New York late Saturday Feb. 22, 2014. A faulty water heater flue pipe caused the carbon monoxide leak that killed a New York restaurant manager and sent more than two dozen people to hospitals, a fire official said Sunday.

(AP Photo/Newsday, Steve Silverman)

HUNTINGTON STATION, New York (AP) — A faulty water heater flue pipe caused the carbon monoxide leak that killed a New York restaurant manager and sent more than two dozen people to hospitals, a fire official said Sunday.

Huntington Chief Fire Marshal Terence McNally said the fumes were circulated in the basement by the ventilation systems at the Legal Sea Foods restaurant at the Walt Whitman Shops

on Long Island. Restaurant manager Steven Nelson was found unresponsive in the basement on Saturday night and pronounced dead at a hospital. Roger Berkowitz, presi-

dent and CEO of Legal Sea Foods, said Nelson, 55, of Copiague, N.Y., had worked for the restaurant for three years and had two sons.

"It's a shock, he was a great guy, we consider ourselves a family," Berkowitz said, adding that other employees were "traumatized." Berkowitz said the carbon monoxide leak was "a wakeup call for commercial businesses" and that monitors should be in all businesses.

Authorities initially went to the restaurant after receiving a call about a woman who had fallen and hit her head in the basement. Rescue workers who arrived at the scene started to feel lightheaded and nauseated and suspected a carbon monoxide leak, officials said.

The restaurant was evacuated and 27 people were treated at hospitals. All of those impacted by the

fumes were restaurant employees, police or ambulance workers.

The building was not required to have carbon monoxide detectors, and there were none, McNally said.

Carbon monoxide is odorless and colorless and can lead to death by suffocation.

Police said a coroner would officially determine Nelson's cause of death. Autopsy information was not immediately available Sunday.

No problems had been found when the restaurant was inspected last March, and another inspection was scheduled for next month, McNally said.

The Walt Whitman Shops, located about 35 miles (56 kilometers) east of New York City, has more than 80 stores, including Bloomingdale's, Lord & Taylor, Macy's and Saks Fifth Avenue. □

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Girl Scout's effort to sell cookies has 'high' expectations

TERRY TANG

Associated Press

PHOENIX (AP) — Customers of some medical marijuana dispensaries are discovering this week that they don't have to go far if they have a case of the munchies.

A few days after a teenager sold dozens of cookie boxes outside a San Francisco pot dispensary, 8-year-old Lexi Menees is returning to TruMed Dispensary in Phoenix on Saturday for the same purpose.

The girl's mother, Heidi Carney, got the idea after hearing about what happened in San Francisco.

"For me, this isn't anything controversial," Carney said. "It's medication. It's no different than standing in front of a Walgreens or a CVS." Lexi and her parents

came on Friday with between 100 and 150 boxes to sell. Her family said they sold more than 50.

"It's better than she would've gotten outside a grocery store," said Justin Menees, Lexi's father.

Susan de Queljoe, a spokeswoman for the Girl Scouts-Arizona Cactus-Pine Council, said selling in front of marijuana dispensaries isn't something the organization would encourage, but that it's up to the parents.

"The girls' safety is our primary concern. So we give guidelines out to all the parents and hope that they will follow them," de Queljoe said.

Lauren Gooding, an oncology nurse who is the president of TruMed, runs the state-licensed facility



Heidi Carney speaks with her husband, Justin Menees, while their daughter, Lexi, 8, sells Girl Scout Cookies outside a marijuana dispensary in Phoenix. (AP Photo/Terry Tang)

with her father and brother. Gooding said Carney called her Friday morning with the idea, and she was immediately on board. In fact, she had already received several messages on Facebook about the San Francisco sale with people suggesting she do the same thing, Gooding said. Gooding also sent a text message to more than 2,000 customers about the cookie sale and threw in a tie-in deal: Patients who buy at least half of an ounce of pot will have their pick of a free box of Thin Mints, Samoas or any of the other cookie choices.

"People will wait to buy when there are incentives," Gooding said. She hopes the presence of the Girl Scouts will help eliminate the stigma tied to medical marijuana dispensaries, Gooding said. Furthermore, with a security guard always on site to ensure nobody illegally consumes their pot purchase, there is no danger of Lexi or any child being exposed to marijuana, she said. "We are not promoting medical marijuana to her," Gooding said.

Girl Scouts officials said they aren't surprised there are copycats after the story of 13-year-old San Francisco Girl Scout Danielle Lei went viral on social media and various news outlets. Lei set

up a cookie table Monday outside The Green Cross, a licensed marijuana dispensary in that city's Mission district.

Kevin Reed, president of the dispensary, said Lei's mother, a secretary for a city task force on medical cannabis, approached him a couple weeks ago. "She wanted to help break down the barriers around medical marijuana," Reed said. "I thought it was extremely sweet. So of course with open arms I said yes." Reed said this isn't the first time Lei has sold cookies in front of other pot facilities. She did it the last two years but is just now getting attention for it, he said.

The feelings of Girl Scouts officials on the matter seem to vary state to state. Earlier this month, reports about Girl Scouts implementing the same strategy in Colorado, where recreational marijuana is now legal, turned out to be a hoax. The Girl Scouts of Colorado issued a statement on its Facebook page Friday to dispel the rumor, effectively prohibiting members from selling at a dispensary.

"We recognize these are legitimate businesses, but we don't feel they are an appropriate place for girls to be selling cookies in Colorado," the organization said. □

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AP Exclusive:

2013 US shutdown hurt 37,000 immigrant cases

AMY TAXIN

Associated Press

LOS ANGELES (AP) — The U.S. government shutdown last year delayed more than 37,000 immigration hearings by months or years for immigrants already waiting in lengthy lines to plead for asylum or green cards.

While the U.S. immigration courts are now running as usual, immigrants who had hoped to have their cases resolved in October so they could travel abroad to see family or get a job have instead had their lives put on hold. Many had already waited years to get a hearing date in the notoriously backlogged courts, which determine whether immigrants should be deported or allowed to stay in America.

Now, some hearings have been pushed into later this year, and thousands more have been shelved until

2015 or later, according to emails obtained by The Associated Press.

"This is a big task, and not one that will be accomplished quickly, especially

to immigration judges and court administrators obtained through a Freedom of Information Act request. A day earlier, O'Leary wrote in a sepa-

wouldn't get their cases heard until at least 2015.

The delays triggered by last year's federal government shutdown that closed national parks and furloughed government workers has further strained an immigration court system already beset with ballooning caseloads, yearslong waits and a shortage of judges. The impact on immigrants has been uneven. Those with strong cases for staying in the U.S. are left in limbo for even longer, while those who face likely deportation have won more time in the United States.

"For some people, it probably was a huge reprieve," said Andres Benach, an immigration attorney in Washington. "Just not my clients."

About 70 percent of all immigration court hearings were put on hold, and all involved immigrants who

were not held in detention centers. The rest — immigrants in detention facilities — proceeded with their hearings as scheduled. About half of immigrants in detention have criminal records.

The situation is especially dire for asylum seekers who may have left family behind in dangerous conditions. They cannot apply to bring relatives to the United States unless they win their cases.

For others, the delay means more uncertainty. Gladys Hirayda Shahian said she has been trying to obtain a green card through her American husband for more than a decade. After getting turned away at the airport after a trip back to her native Guatemala in the 1990s, Shahian said she crossed the border illegally to reunite with him and filed her residency application. □



Gladys Hirayda Shahian, 42, originally from Guatemala, works at her workplace in Los Angeles. Shahian has been trying to obtain a green card through her American husband for more than a decade. After getting turned away at the airport after a trip back to her native Guatemala in the 1990s, Shahian said she crossed the border illegally to reunite with him and filed her residency application. (AP Photo/Damian Dovarganes)

given our current staffing shortage," Chief Immigration Judge Brian O'Leary wrote in an Oct. 17 email

rate email to staff that the tally of deferred hearings had surpassed 37,000 and many immigrants probably



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High court climate case looks at EPA's power

MARK SHERMAN
Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Industry groups and Republican-led states are heading an attack at the Supreme Court against the Obama administration's sole means of trying to limit power-plant and factory emissions of gases blamed for global warming.

As President Barack Obama pledges to act on environmental and other matters when Congress doesn't, or won't, opponents of regulating carbon dioxide and other heat-trapping gases cast Obama's move as a power grab of historic proportions.

The court is hearing arguments Monday about a small but important piece of the Environmental Protection Agency's plans to cut the emissions — a requirement that companies expanding industrial facilities or building new ones that would increase overall pollution must also evaluate ways to reduce the carbon they release.

Environmental groups and even some of their opponents say that whatever the court decides, the EPA still will be able to move forward with broader plans to set emission standards for greenhouse gases for new and existing power plants. But a court ruling against the EPA almost undoubtedly would be used to challenge every step of the agency's effort to deal with climate change, said Jacob Hollinger, a partner with the McDermott Will and Emery law firm in New York and a former EPA lawyer.

"Will they be successful? We don't know yet," Hollinger said. "But it would be an important victory in a

political sense and, potentially, a practical sense."

Republicans have objected strenuously to the Obama administration's decision to push ahead with the regulations after Congress failed to pass climate legislation, and after the administration of President George W. Bush resisted such steps. Both sides agree that it would have been better to deal with climate change through legislation than regulation. In 2012, a three-judge panel of the U.S. Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia Circuit concluded that the EPA was "unambiguously correct" in using existing federal law to address global warming.

Monday's case, for which the court has expanded argument time to 90 minutes from the usual 60, stems from the high court's 2007 ruling in *Massachusetts v. EPA*, which said the agency has the authority under the Clean Air Act to limit emissions of greenhouse gases from vehicles. Two years later, with Obama in office, the EPA concluded that the release of carbon dioxide and other heat-trapping gases endangered human health and welfare. The administration used that finding to extend its regulatory reach beyond automobiles and develop national standards for large stationary sources.

Of those, electric plants are the largest source of emissions.

The administration has proposed first-time national standards for new power plants and expects to propose regulations for existing plants this summer. It will then move on to other large stationary sources such as factories.



This photo shows the Supreme Court in Washington. On Monday, Feb. 24, 2014, the Court will hear arguments on the unanimous federal appeals court ruling that upheld the government's unprecedented regulations aimed at reducing the gases blamed for global warming.

(AP Photo/Susan Walsh)

In the meantime, the only way EPA can compel companies to address global warming pollution is through a permitting pro-

gram that requires them to analyze the best available technologies to reduce carbon dioxide, the chief greenhouse gas. □

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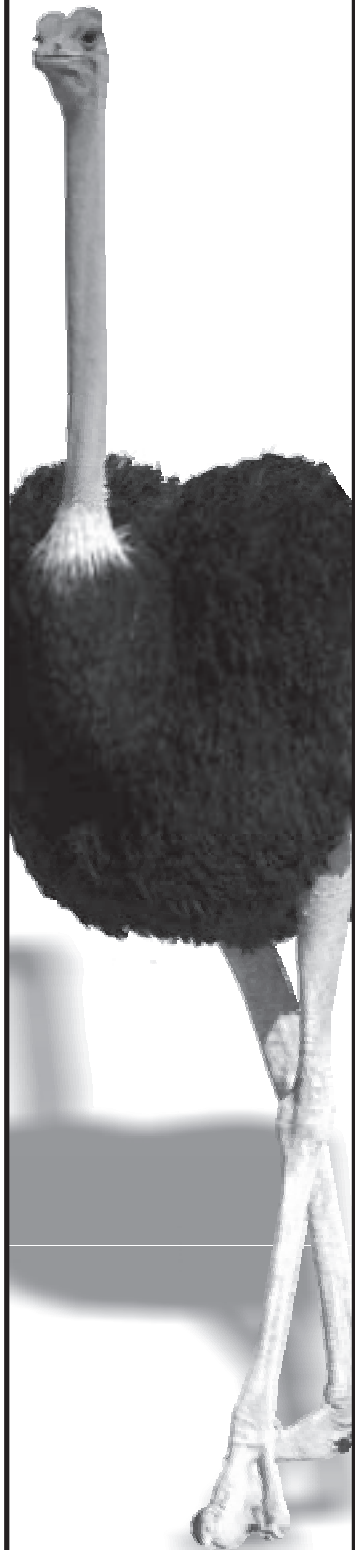
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Detroit automakers worry about UAW money struggles

TOM KRISHER
AP Auto Writer

DETROIT (AP) — The United Auto Workers' membership and dues are down sharply from just six years ago. In another sign of weakness, the union suffered a stunning defeat this month when it tried to organize a Tennessee factory run by labor-friendly Volkswagen. The rejection, by a close vote, was a major setback in the union's effort to expand in the South, where non-union, foreign companies such as VW, Nissan and Hyundai are rapidly growing. But instead of relief, Detroit's three automakers — Ford, Chrysler and General Motors — are increasingly anxious about the 78-year old union's future. For them, it's a "devil you know" situation. They worry that the 382,000-member UAW could be absorbed by a more hostile union. Such a merger could disrupt a decade of labor-management peace that has helped America's auto industry survive the financial crisis and emerge much stronger, according to a person with knowledge of executive discussions. Another union might not be as willing to keep labor costs competitive with overseas automakers, says the person, who asked not to be identified because the discussions are confidential. Despite talk of a union merger, Gary Chaison, a labor relations professor at Clark University in Worcester, Mass., says he doesn't see the UAW giving up its identity and history by combining with another organization.

"It's something that the employers always fear," he says.

Spokesmen for Ford, GM and Chrysler declined comment, and a top UAW

official says the automakers' worries are unfounded. Even as it struggles, the UAW remains the wealthiest union in the nation, with assets of more than \$1 billion at the end of 2012. Officials point to a revived U.S. auto industry and more hiring at UAW-represented factories, moves that have stabilized membership dues that have been falling since 2006.

Still, the union's loss at the VW plant in Chattanooga, Tenn., heightened concerns about how it can grow.

Annual dues collected were down more than 40 percent to \$115 million from 2006 to 2012, as the union's ranks fell by 30 percent. Thousands of members took buyouts and early retirement as Detroit's auto industry lost billions during the financial crisis and worst economic downturn since the Great Depression. Membership has risen slightly since 2009, but dues collected continue to decline.

The union had hoped VW would give it a foothold in the South and help revive its fortunes. Even though the Detroit Three have hired thousands in the past four years as auto sales have recovered, union membership is nowhere near a 1979 peak of 1.5 million. And the new hires are paid only two-thirds of what veteran workers get, keeping dues revenue down. The union agreed to the lower wages and became more cooperative seven years ago to help the companies survive the recession.

As it struggles to reverse declines, the union has been forced to tighten its belt. It cut spending 15 percent from 2006-2012, but still had to sell more than \$300 mil-

lion worth of assets, mainly securities and other investments, to pay operating

to balance its budget. The union may even raise dues this year for the first time in



An employee works on a Passat sedan at the Volkswagen plant in Chattanooga, Tenn. As of Feb. 22, 2014, the United Auto Workers' main source of income is down sharply and its ranks are a fraction of what they were just six years ago.

(AP Photo/Erik Schelzig)

expenses. Last year alone, the UAW raised more than \$47 million by selling assets


47 years.





"That right there tells you it's fairly dire," says Mike

Smith, director of the Walter P. Reuther library, an archive of union history at Wayne State University in Detroit.

A weaker UAW is worrisome for American automakers who only recently reached a labor peace with the union after decades of fighting. The peace resulted in lower wages for new hires and in health care concessions that nearly erased a \$1,500 difference in production costs per car between U.S. and Japanese automakers.

A more radical union could bring a return to strife-filled days, when UAW strikes cost automakers dearly. The last major strike, in 1998 at a GM factory in Flint, Michigan, cost the company about \$2 billion in profits. □



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At Private Schools, another way to say 'financial aid'

PAUL SULLIVAN

© 2014 New York Times

Shannon Lubiano never dreamed she could send her children to the Duke School, an independent elementary school in Durham, N.C., where the tuition is \$15,000 for prekindergarten, rising to nearly \$18,000 for eighth grade. But then a friend told her about the school's indexed tuition plan - essentially a pay-what-you-can model for a private education - and that made all the difference for her.

"When I tell other people about it, they are shocked," said Lubiano, whose husband, a chef, owns a restaurant in town. "They had looked at the Duke School in the past and got run off by the cost."

Duke is part of a small group of independent schools, mostly in the Southeast and West, that have adopted indexed tuition as both a financial-aid strategy and a way to attract people who would not otherwise apply to private school.

"We got to indexed tuition as a philosophical

journey," said Dave Michelman, head of school at Duke. "We're committed to socioeconomic diversity. If you're committed to that it seems a little off-

Instead, he added, the school said: "We're going to charge the right amount of tuition for you."

That range, he said, runs from \$3,000 to full tuition.

school.

The number of families receiving financial aid of some kind has grown to nearly 23 percent, from 15 percent in 2007, accord-

come families and feeling really good about that," said Jeff Escobar, head of Marin Preparatory School and the former director of admissions at Marin Country Day School in California, which has been outspoken about its use of indexed tuition. "Then we realized we were losing the families in the middle."

He said Marin Country Day made it a policy that every family received information on indexed tuition in their application packet, not just the ones who expressed interest in financial aid.

Putting the range - as low, today, as \$750 a year - on the school's website, Escobar said, softened the sticker shock for some families. It also served as a good marketing tool.

Other schools, particularly faith-based schools with a more limited pool to draw from, have used indexed tuition as a way to fill seats. Rick Newberry, a consultant and president of Enrollment Catalyst, said he proposed this method to Indian Rocks Christian School in Largo, Fla., when it needed to increase its enrollment.

"It was an innovative approach to market accessibility and a way to stand apart from the competition," he said.

Indexed tuition is a different approach to making independent school more affordable, but parents still have to go through a rigorous process of revealing information to the school and then waiting and hoping that the school has money to subsidize students.

Lubiano, who now has two daughters, 6 and 3, in school, said Duke asked her for her tax returns, assets, debt and any other sources of support. In their case, her mother-in-law would pay some of the tuition.

The school then asked the family what it thought it could pay.

"They allowed us to be more personal with the explanation of certain things," she said. □



Shannon and Jefe Lubiano, with their daughters, Corrine, 6, right, and Lillian, 3, who attend the private Duke School, at their restaurant Pop's Backdoor South in Durham, N.C., Feb. 20, 2014. Lubiano never dreamed she could send her children to the at least \$15,000 per year school, but then a friend told her about the school's indexed tuition plan — essentially a pay-what-you-can model for a private education. (Travis Dove/The New York Times)

putting to say if you come here we'll give you charity. That's what financial aid sounds like."

Of course, as any behavioral economist would tell you, the two approaches to assistance are exactly the same: Whether a school discounts its \$30,000 tuition with \$20,000 in financial aid or says a family's indexed tuition is \$10,000, the family is paying the same amount.

But that difference in presentation matters: The indexed tuition rate seems to make applying to an expensive school possible for some and accepting a discount palatable to others. It is also a great way for a school to compete with other independent schools that may have larger financial aid budgets. It is an approach smaller colleges and universities have taken for years.

With acceptance letters for independent schools going out now, this is the time of year when many families who applied to the one of the 1,400 independent schools in the United States are waiting to see whether they qualify for the financial aid, which might be the only way they can send a child to private

ing to the National Association of Independent Schools, but only a handful of schools currently use indexed tuition.

While the expectation is that college students can work or get loans to pay for their education, that is not the case with elementary and secondary school students whose families are asked to stretch to pay for a private education. After all, there is public school. For many independent schools, the process of giving out financial aid has become intertwined with the broader issue of income inequality, albeit with a twist. Wealthier families can pay full tuition. And schools have long sought out gifted and talented children from poor families. Yet this approach has, in some cases, created a barbell affect, with the wealthy and the poor on the ends and the middle class - families that make too much for financial aid but too little to pay all the associated costs - left out. "We were taking money from high-income families and giving it to low-in-

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MARIA DANILOVA
YURAS KARMANAU
Associated Press

KIEV, Ukraine (AP) — A top opposition figure assumed presidential powers Sunday, plunging Ukraine into new uncertainty after a deadly political standoff — and boosting long-jailed Yulia Tymoshenko's chances of a return to power.

The whereabouts and legitimacy of President Viktor Yanukovich are unclear after he left the capital for his support base in eastern Ukraine. Allies are deserting him one by one, even as a presidential aide told The Associated Press on Sunday that he's hanging on to his presidential duties.

The newly emboldened parliament, now dominated by the opposition, struggled to work out who is in charge of the country and its ailing economy. Fears percolated that some regions such as the Black Sea peninsula of Crimea might try to break away. Three months of political crisis have left scores of people dead in a country of strategic importance

to the United States, European nations and Russia. Ukraine is deeply divided between eastern regions that are largely pro-Russian and western areas that widely detest Yanukovich and long for closer ties with the European Union.

Yanukovich set off a wave of protests by shelving an agreement with the EU in November, and the movement quickly expanded its grievances to corruption, human rights abuses and calls for Yanukovich's resignation.

The parliament speaker who assumed presidential powers, Tymoshenko ally Oleksandr Turchinov, said in a televised address that top priorities include saving the economy and "returning to the path of European integration," according to Russian news agencies. He is quoted as saying urging calm and a return to order, and "a firm stance against any appearance of separatism and threat to Ukraine's territorial integrity."

The Kiev protest camp at the center of the anti-Yanukovich movement filled

with more and more dedicated demonstrators Sunday, setting up new tents after two days that saw a stunning reversal of fortune in the political crisis.

Tymoshenko, the blond-

German Chancellor Angela Merkel and U.S. senators on her release.

Tymoshenko's name circulated Sunday as a possibility for acting prime minister pending May 25 presiden-

She spoke to an excited crowd of 50,000 in central Kiev Saturday night from a wheelchair because of a back problem aggravated during imprisonment, her voice cracked and her face careworn.

A spokeswoman for Tymoshenko, Marina Soroka, said it's too early to talk about a presidential run. Tymoshenko met with several foreign diplomats Sunday, then headed to visit her mother and will return to work after that.

Susan Rice, President Barack Obama's national security adviser, said he and Russian President Vladimir Putin agreed during a telephone conversation Friday that a political settlement in Kiev should ensure the country's unity and personal freedoms.

But Rice also said Sunday on NBC's "Meet the Press" that it would be a "grave mistake" for Russia to intervene militarily in Ukraine.

European diplomats helped negotiate a short-lived peace deal last week and the chief EU diplomat is coming to Kiev on Monday. □



Protesters guard the Ukrainian government building in Kiev, Ukraine, Sunday, Feb. 23, 2014. The Kiev protest camp at the center of the anti-President Viktor Yanukovich movement filled with more and more dedicated demonstrators Sunday morning setting up new tents after a day that saw a stunning reversal of fortune in a political standoff that has left scores dead and worried the United States, Europe and Russia.

(AP Photo/ Marko Drobnjakovic)

braided and controversial heroine of Ukraine's 2004 Orange Revolution, increasingly appears to have the upper hand in the political battle, winning the backing Sunday of a leading Russian lawmaker and congratulations from

tial elections, but she issued a statement asking her supporters not to nominate her.

She may want to focus her energies instead on campaigning for president and building up strength after her imprisonment.

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Syrian rebels say senior al-Qaida fighter killed

DIAA HADID
Associated Press

BEIRUT (AP) — Two suicide bombers killed a senior al-Qaida operative on Sunday, blowing themselves up inside the mili-

The killing of Abu Khaled al-Suri, who rebels said was serving as al-Qaida chief Ayman al-Zawahri's representative in Syria, falls against the backdrop of bloody rebel infighting be-

of ultraconservative and more moderate opposition fighters.

There was no immediate claim of responsibility for Sunday's assassination, but rebels quickly accused

flict among rebels that has killed thousands of people across northern Syria since it began in early January. If an Islamic State role in al-Suri's death is confirmed, it could further complicate efforts to resolve the infighting, which has undermined rebel efforts to oust President Bashar Assad in Syria's nearly 3-year civil war. Since the rebel-on-rebel clashes began, government forces have chipped away at opposition-held areas, including around Aleppo.

A native Syrian with long-standing ties to al-Qaida, al-Suri was a co-founder of Ahrar al-Sham, a prominent, hard-line rebel group in Syria that is part of a powerful alliance of seven groups known as the Islamic Front.

Akram al-Halabi, a spokesman for the Islamic Front, described al-Suri as "a big figure in global jihad," and said he was appointed by al-Zawahri last year to mediate a dispute between the two al-Qaida affiliates in Syria: the Islamic State and the Nusra Front.

Speaking via Skype, Al-

Halabi said al-Suri had criticized the Islamic State for its antagonistic approach toward other rebel factions. He said rebels believe the Islamic State, which al-Qaida publicly disowned earlier this month, was behind Sunday's bombing.

"The first fingers of blame point to the State," al-Halabi said. "Unfortunately this is going to make the infighting worse."

He did not provide any evidence to support his assertion that the Islamic State had a hand in al-Suri's killing.

The Britain-based Syrian Observatory for Human Rights said two others were also killed in the attack, which it attributed to the Islamic State. The Observatory obtains its information from a network of activists on the ground.

Al-Suri had long been on the radar of Western intelligence agencies. In 2002, Spanish officials described al-Suri, whose real name is Mohamed Bahaiah, as the courier for the late terrorist leader Osama bin Laden between Afghanistan and Europe. □



Lebanese army and citizens gather at the site of an explosion, in the predominately Shiite town of Hermel, about 10 miles (16 kilometers) from the Syrian border in northeast Lebanon. A suicide attacker blew himself up at an army checkpoint after troops tried to search his car this weekend, killing and wounding a number of people including soldiers in the latest blast linked to Syria's civil war, a senior military official and the state news agency said. (AP Photo)

tant leader's compound in the northern Syrian city of Aleppo, rebels and activists said.

tween an al-Qaida-break-away group known as the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant, and an array

the Islamic State. Al-Suri had been critical of the group, reportedly blaming it for the internecine con-

Egypt says Morsi spied for Iran

MAGGIE HYDE
Associated Press

CAIRO (AP) — An Egyptian prosecutor on Sunday accused the ousted Islamist president of passing state secrets to Iran's Revolutionary Guard, the first such explicit detail in an ongoing espionage trial. If convicted, Mohammed Morsi could face capital punishment. He already stands accused of a string of other charges, some of which also carry the death penalty, levelled as part of a crackdown on his Muslim Brotherhood group after the military deposed him last summer. At Sunday's hearing, part of which was aired

on state television, the prosecution accused Morsi and 35 other Brotherhood members of conspiring to destabilize the country and cooperating with foreign militant groups — including Palestinian Hamas and Lebanon's Hezbollah. The case's chief prosecutor, Tamer el-Firgani, said Morsi, his aides and senior Brotherhood members had "handed over secrets to foreign countries, among them national defense secrets, and handed over a number of security reports to the Iranian Revolutionary Guard in order to destabilize the country's security and stability." □

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G-20 vows to boost global economy by over \$2 trillion

SYDNEY (AP) — Finance chiefs from the 20 largest economies agreed Sunday to implement policies that will boost world GDP by more than \$2 trillion over the coming five years.

Australian Treasurer Joe Hockey, who hosted the Group of 20 meeting in Sydney, said the commitment from the G-20 finance ministers and central bankers was "unprecedented."

The world economy has sputtered since the 2008 financial crisis and global recession that followed. Progress in returning economic growth to pre-crisis levels has been hampered by austerity policies in Europe, high unemployment in the U.S. and a cooling of China's torrid expansion.

The centerpiece of the \$2 trillion commitment made at the Sydney meeting is to boost the combined gross domestic product of G-20 countries by 2 percent above the levels expected for the next five years, possibly creating tens of millions of new jobs. World GDP was about \$72 trillion in 2012.

The G-20 combines the world's major industrialized and developing countries from the United States to Saudi Arabia and China, representing about 85 percent of the global economy.

The communique from the meeting said signs of improvement in the global economy are welcome but growth remains below the rates needed to get people back into work and to meet their aspirations. The G-20 said it would "significantly raise global growth" without overtaxing national finance through measures to promote competition and increase investment, employment and trade.

As an initial step toward achieving the \$2 trillion target, each country will present a comprehensive growth strategy to a summit of leaders scheduled for November in the Australian city of Brisbane.

The International Monetary Fund forecasts the world economy will grow 3.7 percent this year. It said the G-20 plan could lift annual world economic growth by half a percentage point for the next five years.

U.S. Treasury Secretary Jacob Lew said the agreement is significant and crucial to "turning the next page" in the global economic recovery.

"G-20 members have spoken clearly: boosting growth and demand tops the global economic agenda" Lew said in a statement.

Hockey, the Australian treasurer, said there was intensive discussion about the challenges each country faces in boosting investment, particularly in infrastructure. □

Noose closed on Mexican drug lord

**ADRIANA LICON
KATHERINE CORCORAN**

Associated Press

CULIACAN, Mexico (AP)

— For 13 years Joaquin "El Chapo" Guzman watched from western Mexico's rugged mountains as authorities captured or killed the leaders of every group challenging his Sinaloa cartel's spot at the top of global drug trafficking.

Unscathed and his legend growing, the stocky son of a peasant farmer grabbed a slot on the Forbes' billionaires' list and a folkloric status as the capo who grew too powerful to catch. Then, late last year, authorities started closing on the inner circle of the world's most-wanted drug lord.

The son of one of his two top henchmen, Ismael "Mayo" Zambada, was arrested at a border crossing in Nogales, Arizona in November as part of a sprawling, complex investigation involving as many as 100 wiretaps, according to his lawyer.

A month later, one of the Sinaloa cartel's main lieutenants was gunned down by Mexican helicopter gunships in a resort town a few hours' drive to the east. Less than two weeks later, police at Schipol Airport in Amsterdam arrested one of the cartel's top assassins, a man who handled transport and logistics for Guzman.

This month the noose started tightening. Federal forces began sweeping through Culiacan, capital of the Pacific coast state of Sinaloa — closing streets,

raiding houses, seizing automatic weapons, drugs and money, and arresting a series of men Mexican officials carefully described to reporters as top officials for Zambada.

But the target was bigger. By Saturday, they had nabbed Guzman, 56, in the resort city of Mazatlan, where he fled after report-

Cartel."

McCaul called on Sunday for Guzman to be extradited to U.S. to ensure he remains behind bars, noting that the drug lord escaped from prison in 2001 and corruption continues to plague Mexico.

But the Mexican operation that netted Guzman was praised across the board



Joaquin "El Chapo" Guzman is escorted to a helicopter in handcuffs by Mexican navy marines at a navy hanger in Mexico City, Mexico, Saturday, Feb. 22, 2014. A senior U.S. law enforcement official said Saturday, that Guzman, the head of Mexico's Sinaloa Cartel, was captured alive overnight in the beach resort town of Mazatlan. Guzman faces multiple federal drug trafficking indictments in the U.S. and is on the Drug Enforcement Administration's most-wanted list.

(AP Photo/Eduardo Verdugo)

edly escaping the law enforcement ring set up in Culiacan.

"My sense in talking with Homeland Security officials and others last night is that we were able to penetrate his circle, get people within the organization to cooperate," U.S. Rep. Michael McCaul, chairman of the House Committee on Homeland Security. "It's not just the most significant capture and the arrest of one man, but it bodes well for our efforts to dismantle and unravel the Sinaloa

in the U.S. as a sign of President Enrique Pena Nieto's commitment to battling organized crime.

On Feb. 13, a man known as "19," whom officials called the new chief of assassins for Zambada, was arrested with two other men on the highway to the coastal resort city of Mazatlan. Four days later, a man described as a member of the Sinaloa cartel's upper ranks was seized along with 4,000 hollowed-out cucumbers and bananas stuffed with cocaine. □

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Girl killed, dozens hurt in attack on Thai protest

JINDA WEDEL
Associated Press

BANGKOK (AP) — Gunmen in a pickup truck attacked an anti-government protest in Thailand's east, killing at least one, an 8-year-old girl, and wounding dozens, as violence in the country's 3-month-old political crisis spread outside the capital, Bangkok, officials said Sunday.

The attack took place Saturday night in Trat province, about 300 kilometers (180 miles) east of Bangkok, where about 500 protesters demanding the resignation of Prime Minister Yingluck Shinawatra were holding a rally near food stalls where people were dining.

Thai media reported that as many as three people were killed and several others are in critical condition, but National Security Council chief Lt. Gen. Paradorn Pattanathuabutr so far confirmed one fatality — an 8-year-old girl.

An employee of Trat Hospital, speaking on condition of anonymity because he was not authorized to release information, said one victim brought there had died.

The attack was the latest in a string of protest-related violence roiling Thailand over the past three months, in which at least 16 people have been killed and hundreds hurt. The protesters want Yingluck to quit to make way for an appointed interim government to implement anti-corruption reforms, but she has refused.

Police Lt. Thanabhum Ne-

wanit said unidentified assailants in a pickup shot into the crowd and two explosive devices went off. It was not clear if the protest group, which uses armed guards, fought back. He and other officials said that about three dozen people were hurt.

Both supporters and opponents of the protest group called the People's Democratic Reform Committee,

as well as police, have been victims of the political violence, which before Saturday was mostly confined to the Thai capital. On Friday night, six people were hurt when unknown attackers threw a grenade into a protest crowd in Bangkok.

Both sides in the ongoing political dispute have blamed the other for instigating violence.

"At this point we do not know who was behind the attack, but there are several factors to take into account in the investigation," Paradorn said.

He added that the protesters in Trat have been rallying for a long time, "so they might have caused disturbance to others. And that area is controlled by groups that are affiliated with the anti-government side," he said.

U.N. Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon called for an immediate end to the violence from any side, and urged the government to bring those responsible to justice.

"The Secretary-General condemns the escalation of violence in Thailand over the past week, in particular armed attacks against protesters in which even children have been killed," said a statement released Sunday by Ban's spokesperson.

Thailand has been riven by sometimes violent political conflict since 2006, when then-Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra, Yingluck's brother, was ousted by a military coup after being accused of corruption and abuse of power. Thaksin's supporters and opponents have since then taken to the streets for extended periods in a power struggle. In 2010, pro-Thaksin "Red Shirts" occupied part of Bangkok for two months. When the army was called out to control them, more than 90 people were killed in violent confrontations. The Red Shirts have mostly kept a low profile during the current political unrest, but as Yingluck faces what her supporters feel are unfair court rulings loosening her grip on power, there are fears they will take to the streets again. □



Police officers point to possible evidence at the scene of an explosion at a main protest site in Bangkok, Thailand, Sunday, Feb. 23, 2014. More than a dozen people were hurt Sunday by a small explosion at an anti-government protest in Bangkok, less than a day after a bloodier attack in an eastern province killed one child and left about three dozen people wounded.

(AP Photo/Wally Santana)

Pope to prelates: no intrigue, favoritism, gossip

FRANCES D'EMILIO
Associated Press

VATICAN CITY (AP) — Pope Francis on Sunday gave his new cardinals what amounted to a code of conduct: "no intrigue, gossip, power pacts, favoritism." Francis also urged the 19 men he elevated to cardinal a day earlier to avoid behaving as if they were in a royal court.

During his homily in St. Peter's Basilica, Francis told the cardinals to strive to "be saints." To achieve that, he advised them to

simply love those who are hostile to them, bless those who speak badly of them, and "smile at those who perhaps don't merit it." Advocating humility, Francis is trying to reform a church hierarchy that has been criticized as arrogant, egotistical, petty and nasty. Scandals involving alleged corruption and power plays tainted the Vatican's top bureaucracy in the last few years before Francis was elected in March. Later Sunday, while addressing

the faithful and the curious in St. Peter's Square, Francis was interrupted by resounding cheers and applause when, wagging his finger, he told them that bishops, cardinals and the pope need to be "good servants, not good bosses" of God's people. As his papacy draws near the one-year mark, Francis has been drawing huge crowds for the traditional Sunday noontime appearance from a window of the Apostolic Palace overlooking the square.

On Sunday, a breezy, cool day, the vast square was packed with tens of thousands of people. That is about two or three times the size of the crowds that his predecessor, Benedict XVI, usually drew on similar occasions. One draw has been Francis' simple language and down-to-earth ways. During the Mass for the new cardinals, Francis urged churchmen to keep their priorities straight, saying Jesus didn't die on a cross "to teach us drawing room manners." □



Millions of lights illuminate Oranjestad's Lighting Parade!



ORANJESTAD – The stars at night were big and bright deep in the heart of Oranjestad, as Carnaval's Annual Lighting Parade passed through town all night Saturday night! Thousands of revelers came out for the radiant event, which was the final major

adult parade of Aruba's annual Carnaval celebrations before the Grand Parades of San Nicolas and Oranjestad, both slated for this coming weekend! The Lighting Parade is one of the most iconic parades of Aruba's Carnaval, both originally introduced to



the annual festivities, and still up till today organized each year by the Aruba Tivoli Club. It was a wondrous sight to see as downtown Oranjestad and the hearts of spectators and revelers alike were illuminated by the spirit of the event – and of course the millions of lights, exotic costumes and amazing musical arrangements played a big part too! □



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pularity from the start. Crazy Fish Monday is served from 5.30 p.m. till 10 p.m. Bugaloe Beach Bar & Grill is open daily from 9 a.m. till midnight. Start your day of right with a delicious cappuccino, or walk in to enjoy a casual lunch in between sunbathing. A few nights a week Bugaloe is host to some of the best live bands of Aruba, while you are savoring dinner and enjoying the beautiful Aruba Sunset! Don't forget to make one hour in the day even happier at Bugaloe's daily Happy Hour from 5 till 6 p.m. Reservations are not necessary, just follow your hips to the music and the fun and smiles saluting you! ☐



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Tendersse Tritsch

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Jamaican bobsled team faces uncertain future



The two-man team from Jamaica JAM-1, piloted by Winston Watts, speed down the track during the men's two-man bobsled training at the 2014 Winter Olympics, Friday, Feb. 14, 2014, in Krasnaya Polyana, Russia. (AP Photo/Dita Alangkara)

JON KRAWCZYNSKI
AP Sports Writer

SOCHI, Russia (AP) — The Jamaican bobsled team was the life of the party once again at the Winter Olympics, laughing and joking its way through a trip to Sochi that was fraught with enough financial hardship and travel hijinks to film a sequel to "Cool Runnings." They remain as lovable as ever, drawing big crowds wherever they went in Sochi. But they almost never got here at all. And after a 29th-place finish in the two-man competition with a 46-year-old driver, the program faces an uncertain future as it tries to move from novelty act to legitimate medal contender.

"We have the athletic ability. We have shown we can do it," Chris Stokes, president of the Jamaica Bobsleigh Federation, said. "We just have to pull things together in Jamaica itself." The Jamaicans were a sensation when they showed up the Calgary Games in 1988, a fairytale journey from the sandy shores of the Caribbean to the frosty Canadian prairie that inspired the Disney film. They returned the Olympics in 1992, 1994, 1998 and 2002. But they haven't sniffed the podium in any of those trips and needed to bring Winston Watts out of retirement to help end a 12-year

Olympic drought and qualify for the Sochi Games. Watts and Marvin Dixon got the job done, but they needed a last-minute fundraising push that prompted fans from around the world and Samsung mobile to contribute \$178,000 in two days to provide the travel budget for the trip. On their way over, some of the luggage they brought was lost, including the runners for their sled and all their sliding gear. The delay kept Watts and Dixon from getting a training run in on the Wednesday before the games. Their equipment arrived in the nick of time, but the Jamaicans had a rough go of it on the track in Krasnaya Polyana. Their sled almost flipped over on their second run, and the only reason they didn't finish in last place was that Serbia failed to finish the competition.

"Our journey here is not easy," Watts said. "There's nothing easy in life. It was a rocky road to get here. We have been through a lot of obstacles."

And as Manute Bol's basketball career, Michael Jordan's baseball career and maybe even Tim Tebow's football career show, novelty will only take you so far.

History is full of colorful sporting characters who captivated audiences, only to fade into obscurity

when when their athletic prowess couldn't match the hype generated by their unique backstories. That's the challenge the Jamaicans face. They have taken every

step of the way with a smile on their faces and the care-free attitude that is a hallmark back home. But there were signs of frustration. The warm reception the Jamaicans received in Sochi stood in stark contrast to the shrugs and indifference they receive at home, where Usain Bolt and the sprinters rule the sports roost and soak up all the local sponsorship money available. "I've been a little perplexed," Stokes said. "We have been talking to a lot of companies about sponsoring us. They say, 'How do we connect Jamaican bobsleigh to the people we want to buy our products?'" Stokes then mentioned the remarkably successful fundraising effort and all the attention the bobsled team receives overseas and wonders why companies back home wouldn't want to latch on. In turn, several international sliders, including ones

from the U.S., have said they wish they could raise so much money as quickly as the Jamaicans did.

"To me, how do you plug into thousands of people, every state in the US, 57 countries around the world loving a team to the point of going in their pocket to support it?" Stokes said. "That should be an easy business problem to solve." Stokes is hopeful that the attention they received in Sochi, and the sponsorship from Samsung, will prompt other companies to jump on board and earn them more steadfast support from the Jamaican Olympic Committee that has been so focused on its Summer Games athletes. "I think we have the athletes, we have the relationships and I expect now to have a new round of funding that will make it a non-issue for us," Stokes said.

Continued on Page 27

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Canada rules rink, a flame dies, an Olympics ends

FRED LIEF

AP Sports Writer

SOCHI, Russia (AP) — The Olympic flame was snuffed out. No chance of that for the Canadian hockey team, champions again. The Sochi Games completed a 17-day run Sunday with Canada's 3-0 victory over Sweden in the men's hockey final, the last of 98 gold medal events. The end of the \$51 billion extravaganza came on a day when Russia captured the medals race, and IOC President Thomas Bach lauded the host city for its "amazing" transformation. Only three sports were on the schedule, with the other gold medals coming from Russian cross-country skier Alexander Legko and bobsledder Alexander Zubkov leading the way for the hosts in the four-man.

Continued on page 20



Canada forward Sidney Crosby shoots and scores on Sweden goaltender Henrik Lundqvist during the second period of the men's gold medal ice hockey game at the 2014 Winter Olympics, Sunday, Feb. 23, 2014, in Sochi, Russia. Associated Press.



Crew members use a squeegee to remove water from pit road during a rain delay in the NASCAR Daytona 500 Sprint Cup series auto race at Daytona International Speedway in Daytona Beach, Fla., Sunday, Feb. 23, 2014.

Associated Press

By DAN GELSTON

AP Sports Writer

DAYTONA BEACH, Fla. (AP) -- Daytona could use a dome.

From rain, potholes, soap and fire, the Daytona 500

has had all sorts of delays the last five years.

The latest one came Sunday, with rain shutting down the season opener at Daytona International Speedway only 38 laps into

Daytona 500 delays now common in NASCAR's opener

the 200-lap race. NASCAR said it was hopeful for an 8:30 p.m. start. If not, and the rain keeps coming, then the second Monday race in three years remains in play. Matt Kenseth won a rain-shortened Daytona 500 in 2009. The 2010 Daytona 500 was interrupted for more than two hours because of a pothole in the track. Rain forced the 2012 race to be run on a Monday night for the first time. Juan Pablo Montoya slammed into a jet dryer that night, igniting a raging inferno that caused another two-hour delay. Safety workers used Tide laundry deter-

gent to clean up the track. Fans flocked for shelter Sunday at the track or left for their cars. The National Weather Service issued a tornado warning in the area and advised people to take shelter. Air Titan, the system designed to reduce track drying time, provided the only action on the track. But there was plenty of fun going on behind the scenes. Drivers and other personnel hit social media to give a sneak peek of what it's like to kill time at a soggy Daytona. Kyle Busch tweeted, "Rain rain go away. Let me lead

my way to victory." His wife, Samantha, posted a photo of her sticking out her tongue while Kyle frowned with the caption, "Rain delay sad/mad faces w (at) kyle busch." Andrea Perry, who works the public relations account for Ricky Stenhouse Jr.'s team, snapped a pic of the Nationwide Series crew lined up inside the hauler on their knee with hands on their heads prepping for a "Tornado drill!!!!" Daytona has lights, meaning NASCAR could stretch the start of the race until late evening. Another Monday run is always a possibility. □

Collins to become NBA's 1st openly gay player

By BRIAN MAHONEY
AP Basketball Writer

Jason Collins became the NBA's first active openly gay player Sunday, signing a 10-day contract with the Brooklyn Nets.

Collins will join the Nets for their game Sunday night in Los Angeles against the Lakers. The 35-year-old center revealed at the end of last season he is gay, but he was a free agent and had remained unsigned.

With a need for another big man, the Nets turned to the 7-foot Collins, who helped them reach two NBA Finals in the early 2000s.

"The decision to sign Jason was a basketball decision," general manager Billy King said in a statement. "We needed to increase our depth inside, and with his experience and size, we felt he was the right choice for a 10-day contract."

Collins has played 12 NBA seasons, including his first

seven with the Nets, when they were in New Jersey and Jason Kidd was their point guard. Kidd is now the Nets' coach and Collins has been a teammate of several other current Nets.

"Jason told us that his goal was to earn another contract with an NBA team. Today, I want to commend him on achieving his goal. I know everyone in the NBA family is excited for him and proud that our league fosters an inclusive and respectful environment," Commissioner Adam Silver said.

The Nets worked out Collins during the All-Star break and met with him again Sunday, with his twin brother, Jarron, hinting that history would be made.

"Hope everyone is enjoying their Sunday. Today should be a pretty cool day!" Jarron Collins wrote on Twitter. The news on Collins comes

as Michael Sam, the SEC defensive player of the year from Missouri who recently revealed he is gay, is taking part in the NFL draft combine. Sam's on-field workouts in Indianapolis are scheduled for Monday. Jason Collins played 38 games last season with Boston and Washington and averaged 1.1 points and 1.6 rebounds in limited minutes. For his career, the 7-foot Collins averages 3.6 points and 3.8 rebounds.

His announcement last spring was followed by numerous NBA players insisting he would be welcomed in the locker room. Collins has played for five other teams and is well respected inside and outside the league - he attended the State of the Union as a guest of first lady Michelle Obama.

"I just know Jason as a person and as a player. That's what I'm happy about. He has earned it. He's a



This June 8, 2013 file photo shows NBA veteran Jason Collins, left, marching in Boston's gay pride parade alongside U.S. Rep. Joe Kennedy III, a college roommate, second right, and Kennedy's wife Lauren Anne Birchfield, center, in Boston.

Associated Press

great guy. It's good for the league. The important thing is to judge him as a person and a basketball player," Chicago coach Tom Thibodeau said.

"I know people who have coached him, and I know

how highly thought of he is."

The Nets had an opening for a big man after trading Reggie Evans along with Jason Terry to Sacramento on Wednesday for guard Marcus Thornton. □

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CASINO AND SHOPS

Olympics ENDS

Continued from page 18

The fifth and sixth doping cases surfaced, involving NHL and Sweden star Nicklas Backstrom — by far the standout name of the group — and Austrian cross-country skier Johannes Duerr.

At the closing ceremony, the athletes stuck to tradition by mugging for cameras and taking a last celebratory prance. The flag

was handed over to the next winter host, and a giant mascot bear blew out the flame and sent the Olympics on their way to Pyeongchang, South Korea.

HOCKEY: The Canadians won gold for the third time in the last four Olympics, taking all six of their games in Sochi. Jonathan Toews scored in the first period and captain Sidney Crosby scored his first goal of the tournament in the second.

Chris Kunitz also scored and Carey Price made 24 saves for Canada. Henrik Lundqvist stopped 33 shots for the injury-depleted Swedes. "We're just an amazing team to watch, the way we work together," Toews said. "We were just all over them."

CROSS-COUNTRY SKIING: Alexander Legkov got down to work in a hurry. He led a Russian sweep of the men's 50-kilometer cross-country race. He



The team from the United States USA-1, with Steven Holcomb, Curtis Tomasevicz, Steven Langton and Christopher Fogt, start their third run during the men's four-man bobsled competition final at the 2014 Winter Olympics, Sunday, Feb. 23, 2014, in Krasnaya Polyana, Russia.

Associated Press

was followed by Maxim Vylegzhanin and Ilia Chernousov. That assured Russia of finishing with the most medals. It was also the host nation's first gold in the sport in Sochi. "This is priceless," Legkov said. "It's more valuable than my life."

BOBSLED: After struggling these last years, Alexander Zubkov set things right. He drove Russia to victory in the four-man sled, adding to his two-man title in Sochi. He is the sixth pilot to sweep those events at an Olympics but the first to do so in his home country. Steven Holcomb, the 2010 Olympic champ, won bronze to give the U.S. seven sliding medals in Sochi, tops among all countries. Oskars Melbardis of Latvia took the silver. Germany had no medals in the four-man for the first time since 1968.

DOPING: Sochi had six doping cases; Vancouver had one four years ago. As IOC President Thomas Bach sees it, that's good news — the drug cheats

are getting caught. "The number of the cases for me is not really relevant," he said. Nicklas Backstrom, who plays for the NHL's Washington Capitals, tested positive for a substance found in allergy medication that Sweden's Olympic Committee said he had been taking for seven years. Austrian cross-country skier Johannes Duerr was cited for the blood booster EPO, the most serious of the Sochi cases.

MEDALS: The arithmetic was clear: Russia was king of the medals, be it total or gold. The host country finished with 33 medals overall and 13 gold. Russia started the day tied with Norway for the most gold. It's the first time Russia has topped both medals tables since the breakup of the Soviet Union. The U.S. won 28 total, including nine gold. Norway had 26 medals, 11 of them gold. Of the Netherlands' 24 medals, 23 came in speedskating. "Nobody believed that Russia would even be in the top three in total medals," Zubkov said. "But we have won." □

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ARUBA WINE & SPIRITS

Jamal Crawford leads Clippers past Thunder 125-117

By **CLIFF BRUNT**
AP Sports Writer

Crawford scored 36 points to help the Los Angeles Clippers beat the Oklahoma City Thunder 125-117 on Sunday afternoon.

Durant scored 42 points, but such performances are almost expected from him. Crawford, on the other hand, averages about 19 points. He's known to be streaky, and in this game, he was on. He made 5 of 8 3-pointers, many of which were launched from well beyond the line.

"Jamal Crawford comes across halfcourt shooting," Durant said. "You've got confidence once you start seeing the ball go in the rim."

Matt Barnes scored 24 points, Chris Paul had 18 points, 12 assists and eight rebounds, Blake Griffin scored 20 points and DeAndre Jordan added 18 points and 12 rebounds for the Clippers, who snapped a two-game skid and beat the team with the league's best record.

"We were on the plane yesterday flying here and we were just talking about how we hadn't beaten any good teams on the road, any really good teams, and this would be a perfect time to start," Paul said.

"Doc (Clippers coach Doc Rivers) was on us, telling us that in the playoffs, you're going to lose a home game at some point and you've got to be able to win on the road. Hopefully this is a win for us that gets us moving."

Durant also had 10 assists, and Serge Ibaka added 20 points for the Thunder, who lost their second straight.

It was the most points the Thunder have allowed this season, and it came on the heels of a 103-81 home loss to Miami on Thursday.

"We've just got to get over this little slow stretch that we're in," Durant said. "We'd better. We've got to play defense. That's the thing. We can't just let teams come in here and do whatever they want offensively."

Oklahoma City overcame a 15-point deficit late in the third quarter to take a 115-112 lead on a 3-pointer by Durant with 2:43 to play, but the Clippers controlled the game from there.

A 3-pointer by Crawford with 1:30 remaining gave Los Angeles a 119-115 lead. Crawford scored again on a floating jumper in the final minute to push the lead to 121-117.

"Jamal made timely shots," Paul said. "Every time they made a run and we just needed a bucket, Jamal was our guy."

Oklahoma City's Russell Westbrook missed a 3-pointer on the other end, and Paul made two free throws to extend the Clippers' lead to six.

Paul sprained his right thumb against Memphis on Friday, and he wasn't sure he'd play.

"I think the credit goes to our training staff," he said. "I came here to the arena thinking that I wasn't playing, but they found a way."

The Clippers shot 66 percent in the first half to take a 72-66 lead at the break. Barnes made a 3-pointer with 9.8 seconds left in the first half, and a loose ball foul was called on Ibaka away from the shot. Griffin made the free throw to



Los Angeles Clippers guard Jamal Crawford (11) goes up for a shot between Oklahoma City Thunder defenders Reggie Jackson (15) and Kevin Durant (35) in the second quarter of an NBA basketball game, Sunday, Feb. 23, 2014, in Oklahoma City.

Associated Press

give the Clippers a 72-64 lead. Durant closed the half with a long 2-pointer. The Clippers scored 44 points in the second quarter, just short of their season high of 46 in a period. The Clippers had 27 fast-break points at halftime. "We really couldn't get ourselves in front of them, and they were beating us down the floor early, and it gave them some confidence and led them to winning the game," Westbrook said. Griffin hit a 3-pointer to push

the Clippers' lead to 91-79 with 3:26 left in the third quarter. Darren Collison's layup pushed the lead to 95-80 late in the third quarter, but Oklahoma City outscored the Clippers 13-4 in the final two minutes of the period to cut its deficit to 99-93. Derek Fisher hit two 3-pointers to start the rally, and then Durant made a 3 with 1.6 seconds left in the quarter.

The Thunder trimmed the Clippers edge to a point on a pair of free throws by Jeremy Lamb, and Fisher tied

it at 107 on a 3-pointer with just over six minutes to play. The Clippers kept the offense working from there, holding on for a win that they hope launches their playoff push.

"It's very important," Crawford said. "Coming down the stretch, we just want to continue to do our game, every single night, no matter who we're playing. It doesn't matter. As long as we keep getting better down the stretch, I think we'll be in good shape."



"FAVI FUNDACION CU VISION"

Venus Williams wins Dubai title for 3rd time

SANDRA HARWITT

Associated Press

DUBAI, United Arab Emirates (AP) — Venus Williams

won her 45th career WTA title at the Dubai Championships in an impressive 6-3, 6-0 victory over Alize Cornet of France in the final on Saturday. The 44th-ranked Williams, playing courtesy of a wild card, also won this title in 2009 and 2010. She's won her last 15 matches in Dubai.

Williams, who will move up to No. 29 in Monday's updated rankings, last won a title at the 2012 Luxembourg tournament.

"I have had a good week," she said. "Everything is falling together."

The former world No. 1, Williams won all five of her matches this week in straight sets.

"Just a lot of match toughness, mental toughness," said Williams, when asked to explain her remarkable week of play. "When things got tough, I definitely got going this week."

"If I was down break point, when push came to shove, I was pushing and shoving,



Venus Williams of the U.S. holds the trophy after she beat Alize Cornet of France during the final match of Dubai Duty Free Tennis Championships in Dubai, United Arab Emirates, Friday, Feb. 21, 2014.

Associated Press

I guess," she added, laughing.

The scoreline didn't indicate how strong an effort Cornet put into the final, often matching Williams stroke by stroke, but falling

short in the end.

After Cornet squandered a 2-1 lead with a service break by losing the next four games, she was in tears during the changeover.

"I think 6-3, 6-0 is a bit tough

in an hour and 30, so I guess there was a battle on the court, but she was just better than me today," Cornet said. "She was playing more aggressive."

"She was pushing me out

of the court very far from the baseline, and I didn't play as deep as yesterday, didn't serve as well. She deserved to win."

Williams closed out the first set on a third set point with a clean backhand winner. In the second set, it was Williams all the way.

The 26th-ranked Cornet was attempting to post back-to-back wins over the Williams sisters.

On Friday, Cornet scored her first career upset over a No. 1-ranked player by beating Serena Williams 6-4, 6-4 in the semifinals.

"The difference between me and Serena was just I put a few more balls in the court," Williams said.

But Cornet walked away hoping if she ever had a similar opportunity to play the Williams sisters in the same tournament the result might go in her favor.

"For sure, beating the Williams sisters in the same tournament would have been amazing, and maybe next time if I have the chance (I can) do it," said Cornet, offering her only smile of the night. □

Nadal wins Rio Open, Nara takes women's title

STEPHEN WADE

AP Sports Writer

RIO DE JANEIRO (AP) — Rafael Nadal

returned from a troublesome back injury to win the Rio Open on Sunday, defeating Alexandr Dolgoplov 6-3, 7-6 (3).

Nadal's victory comes four weeks after he lost the Australian Open, beaten in that final by underdog Stanislas Wawrinka after tweaking his back while warming up. Nadal, who had to fend off two match points in the semifinal against Pablo Andujar, looked more comfortable in the final and improved his record on clay to 298-21, the best in the Open Era.

Dolgoplov has lost all five matches against Nadal.

In the women's final at the combined ATP-WTA event,

Kurumi Nara of Japan defeated top-seeded Klara Zakopalova of the Czech Republic 6-1, 4-6, 6-1 to win her first WTA singles title.

The top-ranked Nadal used the Latin American clay-court swing to launch his comeback a year ago from a left knee injury. It went just fine with titles in the French and US Open.

He'll take the same approach this season, hoping injuries don't slow him as he looks for his 14th Grand Slam title in the French Open in three months.

Nara, the 22-year-old Japanese, was seeded fifth in the tournament and is Japan's top-ranked woman at No. 62. She prefers to play on hard courts but has adapted to the heat and clay in Rio.

"I love Rio," Nara said, cracking a huge smile. "I can't believe I won the tournament, but I am very happy."

The victory is projected to push Nara into the top 50 — probably No. 48 — when the WTA publishes its rankings on Monday.

"I don't want to think too much about being No. 1 in Japan," Nara said. "I just want to focus on my game — every game."

Nara said she thrived on the hot, humid weather in Rio and said Japanese players are getting better on clay because a new clay-court facility has been built in the country.

Maria Bueno, Brazil's greatest female player who won seven Grand Slam singles



Rafael Nadal of Spain celebrates his victory over Alexandr Dolgoplov of Ukraine at the Rio Open tennis tournament in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, Sunday, Feb. 23, 2014. Nadal returned from a troublesome back injury to win the Rio Open on Sunday.

Associated Press

titles — her last in the US Open in 1966 — helped hand the winning trophy to Nara.

Zakopalova won two WTA titles 10 years ago, but has now lost 12 consecutive singles finals. In parts of the match she seemed unwell,

probably bothered by the 32 Celsius (90 Fahrenheit) heat and intense humidity.

"I have an asthma problem so I couldn't breathe," Zakopalova said. "But it's not an excuse. Well done to Kurumi. She deserved it. She played really well." □

Pew maps Twitter conversations, finds 6 types

BARBARA ORTUTAY

AP Technology Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — People take to Twitter to talk about everything from politics to breakfast to Justin Bieber in what feels like a chaotic stream of messages. So it may come as a surprise that the conversations on the short messaging service fit into just six distinct patterns.

The Pew Research Center, working with the Social Media Research Foundation and using a special software tool, analyzed and mapped millions of public tweets, retweets, hashtags and replies that form the backbone of Twitter chatter. The resulting diagrams show how people, brands, news outlets and celebrities interact on Twitter, depending on the topic of conversation.

When it comes to politics, for example, Twitter's citizens tend to form two distinct groups that rarely interact with one another, divided along liberal and conservative lines, according to the report, which was published on Thursday. Liberals tend to post links to mainstream news sources, while conservatives link to sites with a conservative blend, according to the study, whose authors likened their methods to taking aerial photos of crowds gathered in public places. The researchers are quick to note that not everyone uses Twitter — only 14 percent of the U.S. population — and not all who do use it to talk about politics, for example. Still, looking at how conversations flow on social media can provide new insights into how people communicate in a way that was not possible until very recently.

"You could never do that in the old days when you were running around with a pen and clipboard," said Marc A. Smith, one of the study's authors and director of the Social Media Research Foundation.

What emerged in maps of political conversations that the liberal and conservative groups are not even arguing with one another.



Rather, they are "ignoring one another while pointing to different web resources and using different hashtags," according to the study.

The telephone polls that take the pulse of the country about everything from politics to race, religion and technology will continue to form the research center's backbone. But Lee Rainie, one of the study's authors and director of the Pew

Research Internet Project said there are other kinds of data that deserve exploration. Looking at social media — something that large swaths of people participate in — can give insights to important information about people's lives.

Here are the other five types of conversations:

— People who talk about well-known brands on Twitter tend to be disconnected from one another, fo-

cusing only on the topic at hand and not really interacting with each other. The study calls these "brand clusters." One graph, that looked at mentions of Apple, found that users didn't follow, reply to or mention any other person who also tweeted about the company.

— People who tweet from a social media conference, or about another highly specialized topic

tend to form tight crowds of people who are connected to one another as followers. There are only a few users who are not connected to at least a few others in the group.

— "Community clusters" happen when several, evenly sized Twitter groups are connected to each other. In a sense, these can be compared "to people clustering in different stalls at a bazaar." The conversations in this group share a common broader topic, whether that's Michelle Obama or a tech conference, but each cluster takes a different focus.

— "Broadcast networks" are often media outlets or prominent social media figures with a lot of followers who repeat the messages such outlets send out.

— A Twitter "support network," is the last major conversation type. These conversations usually involve a large company, such as a bank or airline, that listens and replies to consumer complaints. When mapped, the interactions in these groups tend to look like a bicycle wheel hub with many spokes.

Bhutan, Nissan partner on electric cars

YURI KAGEYAMA

AP Business Writer

TOKYO (AP) — The Himalayan kingdom of Bhutan has tapped Nissan Motor Co. to supply electric cars for its taxis and government fleet, hoping to reduce reliance on imported oil.

Under the agreement announced Friday, Nissan will supply its Leaf electric car and set up charging stations in Bhutan.

Bhutan, with a population of 720,000, produces and exports hydroelectricity. But it's eager to reduce its dependence on fossil fuels shipped in from abroad.

The tiny landlocked country was long known for measuring "gross national happiness" instead of traditional indicators of prosperity such as GDP. But since 2013, a new government under Prime Minister Tshering Tobgay has downplayed that as a distraction

from problems of poverty and corruption.

The Leaf is the world's best-selling electric car, selling a cumulative 100,000 so far since going on sale in late 2010, comprising 45 percent of the global electric vehicle market.

The car has struggled to reach a critical mass in sales, especially when compared to hybrid models, for instance, but the Leaf remains the symbol of Nissan's commitment to the environment and shows off its engineering prowess.

Nissan has agreements with more than 100 nations, states and cities globally to promote electric cars, including the Spanish city of Barcelona and Sao Paulo in Brazil.

Most deals in electric cars tend to be with developed nations, making Bhutan a relatively unusual case. Nis-



In this undated photo released Friday, Feb. 21, 2014 by Nissan Motor Co., the Japanese automaker's electric car Leaf runs in Thimphu in Bhutan.

Associated Press

san wants to study how its electric vehicle business fits with a developing nation that has substantial clean energy resources.

Nissan President Carlos Ghosn said the deal would involve hundreds of electric cars in the short term as Bhutanese government officials start driving them, and then thousands as the whole nation goes electric.

He also said similar deals with other places were in the works, as increasingly emerging markets combine protecting the environment through electric cars with development, as Bhutan is doing.

"Many emerging markets want to protect the environment," Ghosn said by phone from Bhutan's capital, Thimphu.

No Surprise:

Fed was biggest buyer of Treasuries in 2013

FLOYD NORRIS

© 2014 New York Times

The Federal Reserve financed most of the government's deficit in 2013, in sharp contrast to the year before, when the Fed did not add to its holdings of Treasury securities. The American private sector appears to have been a net seller of Treasuries in 2013, but the foreign private sector was a substantial buyer, according to government estimates released this week.

In 2013, the government issued a net \$759 billion in Treasury securities to the public. That was the lowest figure in six years, as the budget deficit declined because of a healthier economy, which increased tax receipts, and to government austerity that cut spending.

The Fed bought a net \$543 billion of Treasuries during 2013. That was not a record amount - in 2011 it had purchased \$656 billion - but it enabled the Fed to finance 71 percent of the net Treasury borrowing during the year. That was the highest proportion since the government resumed running deficits in 2002. The 2011 purchases amounted to 61 percent of the money the government borrowed that year. The Fed has begun "tapering" its purchases of Treasury securities, as it grows more optimistic about the economy. If it continues on that course, purchases in 2014 are likely to be considerably lower than in 2013. In general, the Fed does not directly finance the Treasury by purchasing newly issued securities. Instead, it buys in the open market. But the net

impact is the same.

While the Fed was stepping up buying, China - the largest foreign creditor of the United States - slowed its purchases, according to U.S. Treasury estimates of international capital flows. The Treasury estimated that China bought a net \$48.5 billion in Treasury securities in 2013, \$20 billion

ing central banks, bought only \$22.2 billion in those securities. If China's purchases were primarily by the government, that would indicate that other governments around the world were net sellers. It is unusual for private foreigners to be more enthusiastic than foreign governments about Treasuries. The last

2013, as the U.S. economy seemed to strengthen. That led some U.S. financial institutions to avoid such securities, whose market values will decline if rates continue to go up. Overall, the American public, including banks as well as private investors, is estimated to have reduced its holdings of Treasuries by



With a security guard standing by, Federal Reserve Chair Janet Yellen prepares to testify on Capitol Hill in Washington. The Federal Reserve financed most of the government's deficit in 2013, in sharp contrast to the year before, when the Fed did not add to its holdings of Treasury securities. (AP Photo/Cliff Owen)

less than it bought in 2012. Japan replaced China as the largest foreign investor, buying \$71.3 billion in Treasuries, up from \$53.1 billion in 2012.

Those figures include both private and public sector purchases, although in China, the figures are presumably overwhelmingly from the public sector.

In total, the government estimates that foreign private investors purchased a net \$198.9 billion in Treasury securities, while public agencies, includ-

time that happened was in 2005. That year, Japan became a net seller of Treasuries for the first time in three years, having halted dollar purchases that were viewed as a way of seeking to keep the yen from rising too high relative to the U.S. currency.

China is estimated to own \$1.27 trillion in Treasuries, and Japan to own \$1.18 trillion. Between them, they control 42 percent of the \$5.8 trillion held by foreigners. Long-term Treasury yields began to rise in

\$4.7 billion in 2013.

If that is accurate, and its accuracy depends in large part on the Treasury's estimates of foreign transactions, which can be subject to substantial revisions, it would probably indicate that it was banks, not individuals, who were net sellers of Treasuries. The Federal Deposit Insurance Corp. reports that during the first nine months of the year, banks and savings institutions collectively reduced their Treasury holdings by about \$46 billion. □

ME Railroad to rise from bankruptcy

PORTLAND, Maine (AP) —

The Maine-based railroad responsible for a fiery derailment that killed 47 people in Quebec in July is getting a new name. The company buying the railroad plans to change the name of Montreal, Maine and Atlantic Railway to Central Maine and Quebec Railway. Railroad Acquisition Holdings, a subsidiary of New York-based Fortress Investment Group, had the winning bid for the bankrupt railroad, which owns about 500 miles (800 kilometers) of track in Maine, Vermont and Canada. The deal is on course to close by the end of next month, said bankruptcy trustee Robert Keach. Montreal, Maine and Atlantic Railway filed for bankruptcy after an unattended train with 72 oil tankers derailed and exploded in Lac Megantic, Quebec, in July, destroying 40 buildings, including a busy bar where many of the victims perished. The railroad blamed a worker for failing to set enough brakes, allowing the train to begin rolling toward the lakeside town of 6,000.

Most of the \$15.85 million in proceeds from the railroad's sale will be used to repay creditors and administration costs. All remaining claims including wrongful death cases, property damage and environmental cleanup will likely draw from a settlement fund to be set up by defendants, Keach has said. Central Maine and Quebec Railway will be unencumbered by those problems.

Fortress said in a filing to the Surface Transportation Board this month that it plans to continue operating the line and hopes to recapture business that was lost because of derailment-related disruptions. There are no plans to try to bring back oil shipments, the company said. It is common for railroad names to change after bankruptcy. The same railroad was known as the Bangor and Aroostook Railroad before a previous bankruptcy, which ended with the rail company's 2003 purchase by Chicago-based Rail World Inc. □

It wasn't just you...

WhatsApp service restored after brief outage

LOS ANGELES (AP) — WhatsApp is starting to work again after the messaging app that Facebook is buying for \$19 billion had some technical trouble.

Associated Press reporters noticed that the app

wasn't functioning Saturday starting at about noon PST, but by 2:30 p.m., Twitter users around the world began saying WhatsApp is working again.

WhatsApp and Facebook didn't respond to emails seeking comment, but the

WhatsApp Status account on Twitter said service had been restored and apologized for the downtime.

Service outages are common for rapidly growing technology companies, and the WhatsApp Status account has tweeted

about an outage about once a month going back through May.

WhatsApp, launched in 2009, has 450 million users globally. Facebook Inc. CEO Mark Zuckerberg predicts it will reach 1 billion in a few years. □

Mars, Venus and the Handling of Money

M.P. DUNLEAVEY
© 2014 New York Times

I was out at dinner with a friend and her husband when they started squabbling about her financial adviser.

"I love her," said my friend, a successful six-figure earner, praising a new plan to balance her personal and financial priorities. "She totally gets me."

Her husband, equally successful, said the adviser didn't impress him much. With the market up about 30 percent in 2013, how could his wife's portfolio have returned only 10 percent? My friend said her returns were fine, and, even more important, the adviser understood her goals. Yes, her husband said, but goals require this thing called "money."

He wasn't wrong. But neither was she. In fact, their Mars-Venus-and-money moment was an uncanny echo of an issue that's bedeviling many financial companies: The data-driven approach of traditional firms is alienating many women. And the way that women prefer to deal with money - holistically, emotionally - can be baffling to the guys on Wall Street.

In case the issue sounds like a relic from the '70s, allow me to quash that thought. Scores of recent studies show that we're in the midst of a tectonic gender shift around money: It's big, slow-moving and ultimately a game-changer. Women have money now, real money: They earn a combined \$29 trillion worldwide, according to the Boston Consulting Group, about \$3 trillion of that in the United States. And while men still earn more, women control nearly three-quarters of all purchasing decisions. Judging by other economic indicators, those numbers will only grow. (Here's a small fact: Did you know that since 1982 women have earned 9.1 million more associate's, bachelor's and master's degrees than men?)

Financial companies see this as a huge opportunity. As Suzanna de Baca, a vice president at Ameriprise Financial, put it: "Women are controlling more money, earning more money and, with the boomer population, inheriting more money. But they're still relatively new at making certain

broader financial choices." That's the conundrum facing people in finance: They're dealing with a highly educated, sophisticated customer who doesn't always know her REITs from her ROI. (For those of either

it, "It created some urgency and focus."

I'll say. Dozens of studies, polls and white papers later, a more complex financial portrait of women emerged than many companies ever bargained for.



The data-driven approach of traditional firms is alienating many women, and the way that women prefer to deal with money — holistically, emotionally — can be baffling to the guys on Wall Street.

(Glynis Sweeny/The New York Times)

sex who aren't fluent in finance, that's real estate investment trusts and return on investment.) And despite their growing affluence, women still lag men in crucial ways. A 2011 study by Vanguard found that the average retirement account balance for men was \$95,675 - but only \$58,833 for women. Other studies have found similar disparities.

So the answer is to market harder to women, right? Not exactly. Money has long been a traditionally male domain, sure, but historically so were medicine and law. No one really considered that gender differences might require different approaches to finance until a 2009 study of 12,000 women by the Boston Consulting Group gave the financial industry a black eye. It found that 78 percent of women criticized financial services in general for what women perceived as condescending treatment and cookie-cutter financial plans. Some finance people describe the impact of the study as grenade-like. Or, as Kathleen Murphy, president of personal investing at Fidelity Investments, put

Some of the results were puzzling. I remember one study by Prudential in 2010 that delivered this head-scratcher: 95 percent of women described themselves as financial decision-makers - yet more than 80 percent said they needed some or a lot of help making money choices. Wow. What do you do with that? Initially, there was a quiet conclusion in the industry that women needed some remedial help. No one said "bad at math," but it was hanging in the air. As the data rolled in, it became clear that women's approach to money simply didn't fit the existing molds. You could talk to guys about research, transactions, performance. Women were more interested in coaching, saving and support, according to extensive Ameriprise and Vanguard research. The

good news is that, maybe, there's nothing wrong with just accepting that. In the past year or so, there has been a significant shift at many companies, driven by executives and advisers - many of them female - who believe that the "women are missing something" model is missing the point. There is a push to view women's financial style as their strength, not their undoing.

"The reality," Nicole Sherrod, managing director of active trading at TD Ameritrade, told me, "is that women gather information about money differently and process it differently than men do, not that we're less intelligent." Women don't need feminine financial products. "For the most part, women need the same portfolios and the same risk management," de Baca said. "The difference is respecting how women communicate."

Nearly 75 percent of women want to learn in a "welcoming" environment with other women, new data from Allianz Life shows. They would also like financial information in plain English so that it doesn't come across like instructions for assembling your own motherboard.

After all, there is newfound respect for the fact that an approach preferred by women - to evaluate financial choices carefully, avoid rash moves and ask a lot of questions - tends to be profitable over the long haul. And some of these big institutions are realizing that their own profits hinge on meeting women on their own terms.

Vanguard was host for a webinar in November, titled "Women and Investing: Unique Situations, Practical Suggestions," that had 5,300 attendees, far more than the company attracted with other online efforts. Fidelity teamed up with LearnVest for two events last year that managed to combine celebri-

ties like Nanette Lepore, the fashion designer, with a message of financial empowerment. Ameriprise says it's retraining more than 10,000 advisers to be more responsive to female clients - and doubling its training budget this year to do so. Yes, I know that these companies stand to gain by investing in this "new" market. But I'd wager that the gains will be even greater for women. □



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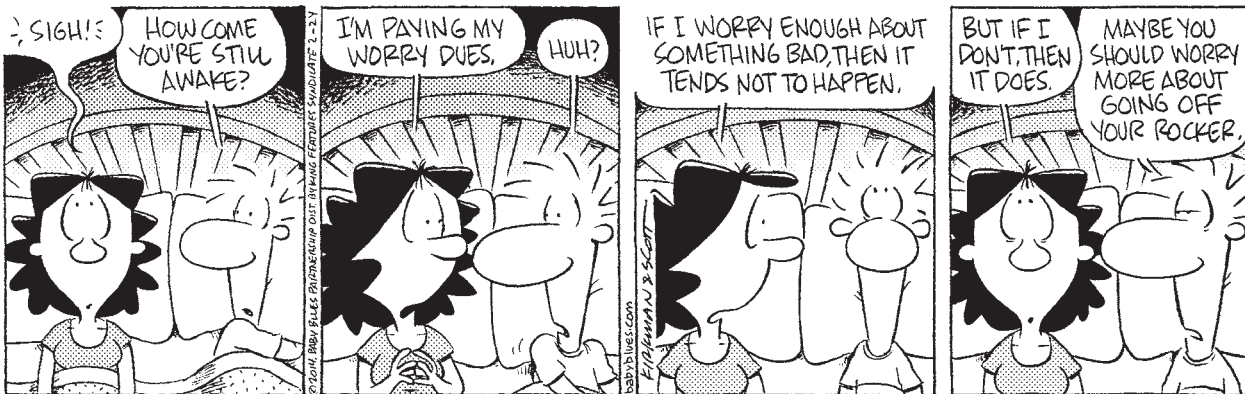
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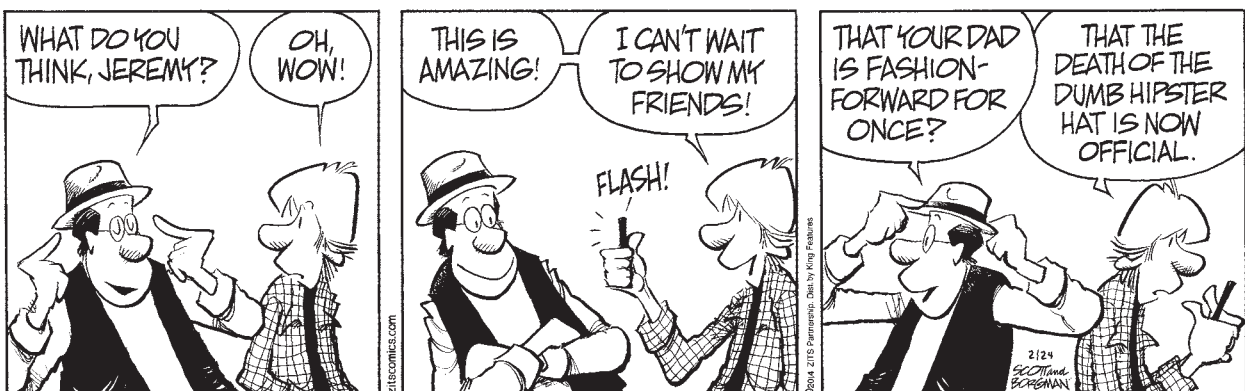
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Zits



Conceptis Sudoku

		6	1		7		5	
9		5			8	1		
	8						4	3
1	9			8				7
			7	3	2			
8				5			6	4
3	6						1	
		2	4			7		8
	7		8		5	6		

Difficulty Level ★

2/24

Sudoku is a number-placing puzzle based on a 9x9 grid with several given numbers. The object is to place the numbers 1 to 9 in the empty squares so that each row, each column and each 3x3 box contains the same number only once. The difficulty level of the Conceptis Sudoku increases from Monday to Sunday.

Saturday's puzzle answer

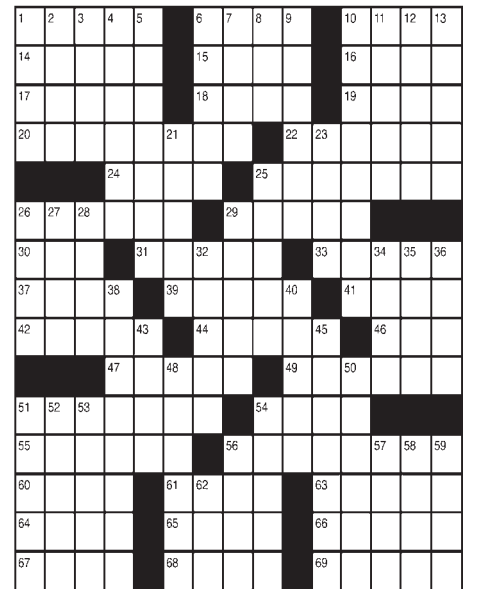
2	8	7	5	6	9	4	3	1
4	1	9	7	2	3	8	5	6
6	3	5	8	4	1	2	7	9
8	9	3	2	1	6	5	4	7
5	2	6	9	7	4	3	1	8
7	4	1	3	8	5	9	6	2
9	7	4	6	3	2	1	8	5
3	5	8	1	9	7	6	2	4
1	6	2	4	5	8	7	9	3

ACROSS

- Animal with a hump or two
- Grand ___; homer with the bases loaded
- Lion's cry
- Amphitheater
- Lunch spot
- In addition
- Chairs & stools
- Performs
- Passport stamp
- Germfree
- Sifting devices
- Salt Lake ___
- Singer Tony ___
- Concentrating hard
- Oomph
- Ring of flowers
- San Francisco baseball player
- Removes from office
- Item on a nightstand
- Clickety-___
- Ginger cookie
- Water vapor
- "A rose by any ___ name..."
- Montgomery's state: abbr.
- Inclines; slants
- Spending plan
- Pacify; placate
- Summon with a beeper
- Hovel
- Popular dog breed
- Sharpen
- In ___ of; as a substitute for
- Proverb
- Wraps up
- Fancy vases
- ___ firma; land
- Bodies of water
- Created
- Derisive smile

DOWN

- Late singer
- Mama ___
- Vicinity
- Cruel
- Lure; attract
- Permanent
- Frightening
- Like a frilly bridal veil
- Toward the rear of a ship
- Cluttered conditions
- Very hungry
- Pimiento-stuffed tidbit
- Valuable thing
- Rump ___; cut of beef
- Garret
- ___ 4 ___ 16 is 4
- ___ Cassidy and the Sundance Kid
- Troubles
- ___ as a pin
- Magazine title
- Small flies
- Without companions
- Obstacle
- Saga
- Quarrel
- Lack of color in the complexion
- Shish ___; BBQ favorite
- Veal or pork
- Nickelodeon toon
- Place of refuge
- Benumb
- Sooty residue
- Bell's invention
- Chinese bear
- Halt temporarily
- Give for a time
- Challenge
- Villain
- Fanny
- Lyricist ___ Gershwin



Created by Jacqueline E. Mathews

2/24/14

Saturday's Puzzle Solved

PAN	STABS	ERIC
OWED	TABOO	NASA
DESI	EMERY	TILT
STAMPED	ERASE	ONES
GAPS	AAM	
ACCRUE	GRUMBLED	
SHOAL	TRACY	CANT
SIAM	PEACE	GENIE
EDS	ERASE	GENIE
SETTLERS	POISED	
AKA	PEAL	
MENU	CHRISTINA	
OVER	HAUNT	NODS
PERU	ELITE	GAZE
ENDS	SENIOR	HEN

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2/24/14

Jamaican bobsled team

Continued from Page 15

"And I expect to have an athlete on the podium within the next four years and maybe an Olympic medal in four to eight years. "We have the athletic ability. I think we need to bring a little more focus, spread our base a little bit." When asked if Samsung would continue its relationship with the bobsled team beyond the Sochi Games, spokeswoman Brett Cummings said, "We're very happy with our partnership with the Jamaican

bobsled team. We are currently focused on the Sochi Olympic Winter Games." Because of the expense, the Jamaicans haven't sent a four-man team to the Olympics since 1998. And the two-man sled has never finished higher than 28th at an Olympics. With Watts "old as dirt" in his words and expected to drive the sled only for another year or two, the Jamaicans also have to develop a new generation of drivers to give them a chance at taking the next step. □

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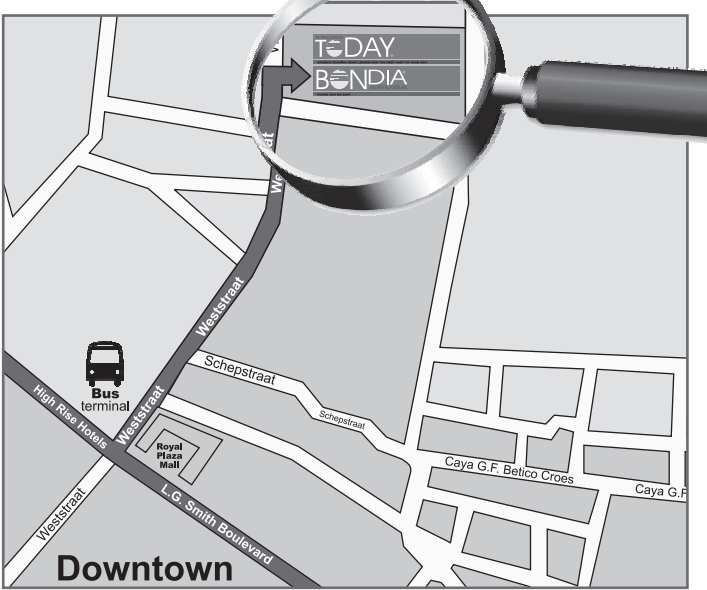
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Beijing issues rare air pollution alert

DIDI TANG

Associated Press

BEIJING (AP) — When the air gets really bad, Beijing says it has an emergency plan to yank half the city's cars off the road. The only problem is: It may be difficult to ever set that plan in motion.

It wasn't triggered in January, when the city recorded extremely poisonous air pollution. And not this week, when pollution was expected to continue for several days at hazardous levels. A rare alert issued Friday was an "orange" one — the second-highest in the four levels of urgency — prompting health advisories and bans on barbecues, fireworks and demolition work, but no order to pull cars from the streets. "Yesterday, I thought it was bad enough when I went out to eat. But this morning I was hacking," a Beijing pedestrian who gave her name as Li said Friday, as a thick haze shrouded the

city.

Still, the government did not issue the red alert. Beijing's alert system requires a forecast of three days in a row of severe pollution for the highest level. Days of extreme pollution or polluted skies that are expected to clear in less than three days do not trigger the most stringent measures.

A period of pollution in January that saw density readings of PM 2.5 particles exceeding 500 micrograms per cubic meter prompted only the mildest, blue-level alert. That density is about 20 times as high as the 25 micrograms considered safe by the World Health Organization. PM refers to "particulate matter," a mixture of extremely small particles and liquid droplets, the size of which is linked to their potential for causing health problems.

The measures that went into effect Friday also ask members of the public to



Cars clog in the traffic in Beijing's Central Business District on a hazy day, Friday, Feb. 21, 2014. A rare air pollution alert issued Friday in Beijing prompted health advisories and bans on barbecues, fireworks and demolition work, but fell short of the strictest measures which would include ordering half the city's cars off the streets.

Associated Press

use public transportation and to turn off their cars rather than let them run idle, as well as call for water sprinkling on the street and dust-control measures at building sites. The most stringent level, red, would order half of Beijing's 5 million cars off the road — based on the last digit of their license plate.

Ma Jun, of the non-governmental Institute of Public and Environmental Affairs in Beijing, said that accu-

ately forecasting three days of heavy pollution is technically difficult.

But in any case, he said, the government is reluctant to adopt the most disruptive measures, because it would be nearly impossible to notify all drivers of the rules and to adequately boost the capacity of public transportation to accommodate the extra passengers.

"When the alert is at a low level, the measures are not

effective, but those for the high-level alert are not feasible," Ma said. "The government is reluctant to raise the alert level."

However, Ma credited the government with becoming more open in recent months about air pollution levels, and noted that many people receive real-time government updates about Beijing's air quality on their mobile phones, so that they can take protective measures.

California farmers won't get U.S. water

SCOTT SMITH

Associated Press

FRESNO, California (AP) — U.S. officials say many farmers caught in California's drought will receive no irrigation water this year from a vast system of rivers, canals and reservoirs interlacing the state.

The U.S. Bureau of Reclamation announced Friday it will continue to monitor rain and snowfall, but at this point there's not enough

water in the Central Valley Project to give water to farmers.

Last year, Central Valley farmers received 20 percent of their normal allowance, and that figure is now set at zero percent.

This marks the third dry year for the state, and Gov. Jerry Brown last month declared a drought emergency.

Federal officials say that water used by communities and wildlife will also suf-

fer deep cuts.

At this time of year the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation carefully measures the mountain snow pack, rainfall and reservoir levels all over California to determine the water available for farmers, fish migrations and communities.

Gov. Jerry Brown last month declared California's drought emergency, and both state and U.S. officials have pledged millions of dollars to help with water conservation and food banks for those put out of work by the drought. California officials who manage the State Water Project, the state's other vast water system, have already said they won't be releasing any water for farmers, marking a first in its 54-year history.



President Barack Obama speaks to the media on California's drought situation Friday, Feb. 14, 2014 in Los Banos, Calif.

Associated Press

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'Lego Movie' lead builds, No. 1 for third weekend

JESSICA HERNDON

AP Film Writer

LOS ANGELES (AP) — Action-packed new releases couldn't stack up to 3D hit "The Lego Movie," which took the No. 1 slot in its third weekend at the box office. The Warner Bros. animated film bested Relativity Media's "3 Days to Kill" and Sony's "Pompeii" on their opening weekends.

"The Lego Movie," featuring the voices of Chris Pratt, Elizabeth Banks and Morgan Freeman, earned \$31.5 million, according to studio estimates Sunday. The domestic total has passed \$183 million. Overseas, it grossed \$23.1 million this weekend.

Heading into full-fledged franchise territory with a sequel set to release in May 2017, "The Lego Movie" is the highest grossing film of 2014.

"It's been really tough for any of the newcomers to displace 'Lego,'" said Paul Dergarabedian, senior media analyst for box-office tracker Rentrak. "They had such a great release date that put them in this perfect position to dominate the marketplace for several weeks. For 'Lego' to earn \$31 million in its third weekend, that would be impressive in its first weekend for any film in the first quarter." Relativity Media's crime drama "3 Days to Kill," starring Kevin Costner and Amber Heard, came in second with \$12.3 million in its first weekend at the multiplex. "Pompeii," Sony's boiling gladiator drama starring "Game of Thrones" star Kit Harington, took the third-place slot with \$10 million. There was a fairly even gender split for the Constantin-financed film, with the audience breaking down as 52 percent male and 48 percent female. The film's slot in the top five was steered mostly by viewers under 30.

"Pompeii" got savaged by critics," Dergarabedian said. " '3 Days to Kill' wasn't loved by critics either, so you had two films that didn't have a shot at taking 'Lego' out. But these movies did about what we

would expect."

In its second weekend, the Sony and MGM reboot "RoboCop" dropped from third to fourth with \$9.4 million. Starring Joel Kinnaman, Gary Oldman and Michael Keaton, the modernized science-fiction film (the 1987 original starred Peter Weller as a cop who gains a new robotic body) is down 57 percent from last weekend's domestic opener. For the second weekend in a row, the action film performed better overseas with \$17.7 million. "The time of year that we're in, the movies just aren't the critics' darlings," Dergarabedian said. "These films give people options. But they won't necessarily set the world on fire at the box office."

Sony's George Clooney-directed "The Monuments Men" was pushed down to fifth place from last week's fourth-place spot with \$8.1 million. Still, Sony dominated the multiplex with four films in the top 10. "About Last Night," starring Kevin Hart, Michael Ealy, Joy Bryant and Regina Hall, gained \$7.4 million in its second weekend after a strong Valentine's Day opening. It is down a hefty 71 percent from its opening with a \$38.15 million domestic total. Kevin Hart's "Ride Along," also starring Ice Cube, marks another hit for the comedian as it remains in the top 10 for the sixth weekend in a row. The Universal Pictures buddy comedy earned \$4.7 million. It has gained over \$123 million domestically since it opened on the Martin Luther King Jr. holiday weekend.

Because of its vast success, the studio has secured "Ride Along 2." Tim Story will be back to direct, while Phil Hay and Matt Manfredi will return to pen the sequel.

Disney's "Frozen," locked in at No. 8, refuses to thaw with \$4.4 million over the weekend and \$980 million worldwide. The animated musical is the third-highest grossing domestic animated release of all-time. It surpassed "Despicable Me



This image released by Warner Bros. Pictures shows characters, from left, Benny, voiced by Charlie Day, Batman, voiced by Will Arnett, Vitruvius, voiced by Morgan Freeman, Wyldstyle, voiced by Elizabeth Banks and Unikitty, voiced by Alison Brie, in a scene from "The Lego Movie."

Associated Press

2," becoming the second-highest grossing animated release ever. It is the highest grossing original animated release of all-time. Rounding out the top 10,

Universal's "Endless Love," starring Alex Pettyfer as the romantic lead opposite Gabriella Wilde, brought in \$4.3 million, while the Colin Farrell-starring drama "Win-

ter's Tale" gained \$2.1 million.

Next weekend, the action releases continue as Liam Neeson's "Non-Stop" hits theaters. □

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Kiss says it won't play at Rock HOF induction

WAYNE PARRY

Associated Press

WALL TOWNSHIP, New Jersey (AP) — Kiss won't rock and roll all night — or at any point during the day, either — when they are inducted into the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame in April, the band said Sunday.

The 40-year-old group is unable to agree on which lineup should perform during the April 10 ceremony in New York City, and has decided not to plug in at all.

The dispute concerns whether original members Ace Frehley and Peter Criss would join Gene Simmons and Paul Stanley in a live performance, or whether the current lineup of Stan-



In this Thursday June 13, 2013, file photo, from left: bassist Gene Simmons, guitarist Tommy Thayer and singer Paul Stanley of the US band Kiss perform on stage in Berlin, Germany.

Associated Press

"It is over 13 years since the original lineup has played together in makeup and we believe the memory of those times would not be enhanced," Kiss wrote on its site. "To bring this to a quick end, we have decided not to play in any lineup, and we will focus our attention on celebrating our induction into the Rock and Roll Hall Of Fame."

The festering dispute was brought to a boil when Frehley called into Eddie Trunk's syndicated radio show Friday night to say that Simmons and Stanley had rejected a reunion with the original four members for the induction.

"They just shot down any type of reunion with us," Frehley said during the broadcast. "It's very frustrating. It's what the fans wanted, it's what the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame wanted, and it's not gonna happen. You don't want to do something for the fans after 40 years of them supporting you?"

The band's statement said it has never refused to play with Frehley and Criss.

Criss, who lives in Wall Township, New Jersey, said he wanted to let fans know there would be no reunion before they bought tickets for the induction ceremony, which range from \$120 to nearly \$600.

"This is disgraceful, and I feel bad for the fans who were looking forward to the four of us being inducted together," he said.

Criss did not indicate whether he would attend the induction; Frehley said he is unsure whether he'll be there.

Kiss began in 1973, and the original lineup played together until 1980. They reunited from 1996 to 2000, but the band has continued with replacement members wearing the Frehley and Criss makeup and costumes.

Rock star Hagar talks rum and coffee table books

SUZETTE LABOY

Associated Press

MIAMI (AP) — One is a rock star and the other a rock star chef, but Sammy Hagar and Emeril Lagasse have a shared passion for food and music.

"He loves music as much as I love cooking," Hagar said before giving a weekend concert at the South Beach Wine and Food Festival, where he teamed up with Lagasse for a night of classic guitar tunes and rum. The men have been friends for years, often even vacationing together. Lagasse even cooked at Hagar's wedding more than 20 years ago — before the chef was even on the Food Network.

"Sometimes he cooks for me in the house," Hagar said. "I have an acoustic guitar and play and goof off while he's cooking. And I will jump up and say, 'Emeril, let me cook one dish.' And I'll bang something out."

Hagar, known as the "Red Rocker" and former lead singer of the band Van Halen, sold his part of the Cabo Wabo Tequila company (he still owns the Cabo Wabo restaurants and has the logo tattooed



In this Saturday, Feb. 22, 2014 photo, musician Sammy Hagar holds a bottle of his Beach Bar Rum, and a mojito made with the rum, during an interview in Miami.

Associated Press

on his left arm) not long ago and turned his attention to rum. Sammy's Beach Bar Rum is made in Hawaii, where Hagar has a home. "The only white rum you can drink straight," he said after taking a sip of a mojito made with his rum. "You can do shots like tequila. Put it over rocks. It's so pure."

Hagar grew up around food — his grandfather was a "real" Italian chef — and he often cooks at home. But not for a lot of people. "That's stress," he said, adding that his backup plan was never to be a chef. He has a handful of restau-

rants and bars and a best-selling autobiography, not to mention the rum business. But it was clear while hanging with Hagar and sipping rum drinks that this funny curly-haired rocker is always thinking of his next project. He said he's working on a coffee table book that will include cocktails and food pairings, naturally.

"I would just like to be the real most interesting man in the world," he joked, referring to the character in a Dos Equis beer advertising campaign. "I want to do so many things. And I want to do them good."

ley, Simmons, Eric Singer and Tommy Thayer would play instead.

In a message on its website, Kiss said it won't perform with any lineup, calling it "an emotional situation where there is no way to please everyone."

"Our intention was to celebrate the entire history of Kiss and give credit to all members, including longtime present members Tommy Thayer and Eric Singer, and additionally Bruce Kulick and Eric Carr all who have made this band what it is, regardless of the Rock and Roll Hall Of Fame's point of view," the band wrote on its web site. "Although Kiss has moved forward far longer without them, Ace and Peter are at the very foundation of what we have built and this would all be impossible had they not been a part of it in the beginning."

The band made no mention of former guitarists Vinny Vincent, who helped kick off the band's unmasked era, or Mark St. John, who was with the band briefly in 1984 and who died in 2007.



Least We Can Do



GAIL COLLINS
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Can we talk about the United Nations? I know, I know. But give me a minute. We don't do this very often.

It looks as if the Senate is going to fail to ratify the U.N. treaty on the rights of people with disabilities this year. There are, of course, tons of things the Senate is going to fail to tackle between now and the fall elections. You name it, they're prepared to not do it. But this treaty is kind of special. It's based on our very own Americans with Disabilities Act. It's an international agreement in which the rest of the world basically promises to behave more like the United States. How could anything go wrong with that? hahahaha

Well, you need a two-thirds vote of the Senate to ratify a treaty, and when you are talking about numbers that high, you are coming close to everybody who isn't either crazy or facing a primary challenge from a member of the Tea Party.

When the treaty first came up for a vote a little more than a year ago, it was torpedoed by the far right. Rick Santorum, the former Republican presidential candidate and well-known sweater-vest wearer, claimed it would endanger American parents' right to home-school their children. This is because there's a section that says: "The best interests of the child shall be a primary consideration."

We will never agree to a treaty that says children's interests come first! Children should be seen and not considered. Thanks to our strong commitment to this point, the United States is the only country outside of South Sudan and Somalia that has failed to ratify the U.N. convention on children's rights.

Still, advocates felt they had a good chance to win on the disability treaty this year. They just needed to switch a handful of Republican votes. People from the State Department were working with Sen. Bob Corker of Tennessee, a "no" who had supported an arms-reduction treaty with the Russians in 2010. So not crazy. Also not up for re-election. Then, at the start of Christmas break, Corker abruptly sent out a news release announcing that the treaty could "undermine our Constitution," and that he wouldn't vote for it.

"Everybody spent a lot of time with Corker, and added some regulations to satisfy him, but apparently it wasn't enough," said Bob Dole in a telephone

interview. Dole, the former Republican leader, is an advocate for the disabled, who sat in his wheelchair watching as members of his party rejected the treaty the first time around.

Now, at 90, he's back on the case, making phone calls. But if Corker continues to balk, it's hard to see where the new votes for ratification will come from. Certainly not from people like Sen. Ted Cruz of Texas, who once famously claimed that the United Nations was conspiring to close down all American golf courses. Or Sen. Pat Roberts of Kansas, who is facing a primary challenge from a radiologist whose website promises that he will be "the next Ted Cruz."

"I wanted to support this, OK?" said Corker. His argument is basically that ratification of any treaty on human rights would expand the powers of the federal government. Although, in this case, of course, the agreement under consideration is already American law.

"We've seen the (U.N.) committees be aggressive on interpreting these treaties and making recommendations to countries," Corker said.

This is true. The United Nations is full of committees issuing reports, which occasionally sound like the work of international lawyers with too much time on their hands. For instance, there was a report on Belarus' compliance with a treaty on women's rights that suggested that the national Mother's Day celebrations were "encouraging women's traditional roles."

On the other hand, nobody has to do anything the committees recommend. "It's advice," said Mark Lagon, a former U.S. ambassador-at-large who now teaches at Georgetown University. Belarus still has its Mother's Day.

When it comes to human rights, the problem with the United Nations is hardly that it forces countries to do politically correct things they don't want to do. It's that the U.N. has so little power to do anything at all.

This week, a U.N. report found that North Korea has been trying to "terrorize the population into submission" through enslavement, murder, rape and torture. It recommended that the U.N. Security Council take the matter to the International Criminal Court. This doesn't seem likely, because China, North Korea's usual protector, has a veto.

We will now pause for a sigh. Then we will acknowledge that our choice is to give up on the U.N. or try to make it stronger. Since our recent history is crammed with disasters caused by going it alone on the international stage, that brings us down to only one good option.

We need an effective international organization that supports the rights of the world's most vulnerable people. Ratifying that disability treaty would be one small yet useful step in that direction.

It's such a shame we're not willing to be part of the solution. □



The Games Putin Plays



ROSS DOUTHAT
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The last time geopolitics intruded into an Olympics, during the 2008 Beijing Games, Vladimir Putin was the crisis' winner: His military delivered a decisive spanking to Russia's neighbor Georgia, whose government had fatally overestimated the West's willingness to intervene on its behalf. The mini-war sent a clear message: After a long period of retrenchment, the Russian bear still had an appetite for power politics, and the claws to satisfy it.

Today the Olympics are on Russian soil, and violence is convulsing another nation in Moscow's traditional orbit. But the crisis in Ukraine is sending a rather different message. So far, events in Kiev have been a lesson in the limits of Russian influence and the implausibility of Putin's claim to offer a rival civilizational model to the liberal democratic West.

That such a rivalry is Putin's goal seems clear enough. After a century in which Russia styled itself a revolutionary power fighting the West's reactionary capitalists, the former KGB man has sought a return to the ideological role his nation played under the czars - as a conservative bulwark against the West's revolutionary liberals.

As The Week's Michael Brendan Dougherty has pointed out, this back flip has been visible across the post-9/11 era. But it's been thrown into relief by Putin's recent domestic gambits - the blasphemy trial for Pussy Riot, the crackdown on gay rights, the rhetoric contrasting Russia's "traditional values" with U.S. and

Western European relativism.

Crucially, this rhetoric isn't just for domestic consumption: It's also pitched to the developing world. In the British Spectator, Owen Matthews argues that just as it did in the Communist era, "Moscow is again building an international ideological alliance," with Putin offering himself up as a potential leader for "all conservatives who dislike liberal values," no matter what country they call home.

But there is a vast difference between Putin's grand strategy and both its Czarist and its Soviet antecedents.

The czars sought a "Holy Alliance" to defend a still-extant ancien régime - a rooted, hierarchical system that still governed many 19th-century European societies. But today's Russia, brutalized by Communism and then taken over by oligarchs and grifters, is not a traditional society in any meaningful sense of the term, and the only thing it has in common with many of its potential developing-world allies is a contempt for democratic norms. In the Romanov era, the throne-and-altar idea still had a real claim to political legitimacy. But there is no comparable claim Putin can make for his own authority, and no similar mystique around his client dictators, be they Central Asian strongmen or Bashar Assad.

The Soviets' claim to be in history's vanguard, meanwhile, earned them allies and fellow travelers not only in Latin America, Asia and Africa, but among the best and brightest of the liberal West. No comparable Western fifth column seems likely to emerge to enable Putin's goals. A few voices on the American right have praised his traditionalist rhetoric - but only a few. As beleaguered as America's social conservatives sometimes feel, we're a long distance from signing up as useful idiots for a thuggish, obviously opportunistic "family values" crusade.

Which is not to say that Putin's

geopolitical approach is all folly. On the contrary, he often plays the great game far more effectively than his European and U.S. counterparts.

But the weakness of Russia, its government's corruption and the unattractiveness of its alleged traditionalism all combine to foreclose his grandest ambitions.

This is basically what we're watching happen in Ukraine. Despite the blunders of the European Union - which courted Kiev without seeming to realize that Russia might make a counteroffer - Putin is struggling to win a battle for influence in a country that both the Romanovs and the Soviets dominated with ease.

And the struggle is particularly telling given that the Great Recession exposed the EU as a spectacularly misgoverned institution, whose follies consigned many of its member states to economic disarray.

Yet even that record hasn't persuaded the majority of Ukrainians to warm to Moscow's embrace instead. It takes much more than mere misgovernment to make the European project less attractive than Putin's authoritarian alternative.

For an interesting parallel to Putinism's problems, consider what's happening halfway around the world, in Venezuela, where the laboratory Hugo Chávez built for "Bolivarian Revolution" is descending into the same kind of violence as in Ukraine.

Like Putin's traditionalism, Chávez's neosocialism was proposed as an ideological challenger to the American-led world order. (And Chávez had more U.S. cheerleaders than does Putin.) But like Putinism, Chavismo lacks basic legitimacy absent the threat of violence and repression. The lesson in both cases is not that late-modern liberal civilization necessarily deserves untested dominance.

But 25 years after the Cold War, from Kiev to Caracas, there is still no plausible alternative. □

Tonight at 8PM at Palm Beach Plaza Mall: Aruba's Majestic Carnival Season Comes To Life!



PALM BEACH - Palm Beach Plaza Mall new majestic carnival season has started at Aruba's largest mall. The Aruba Carnival is a thrilling show of over-the-top pageantry, produced by thousands and delighting and

uniting the entire country. Here's the scoop on how it began.

Carnival was born in 1954, as a series of small street festivals. The Tivoli Club, Aruba's oldest private social club, was the first to



have a pre-Lenten celebration in Oranjestad in February 1944. The Allied victory of World War II was

commemorated by an Aruba Festival - a large parade in San Nicolas comprised largely of Caribbean-English immigrants who came to Aruba to work at the Lago Oil Refinery. The first steel and brass bands debuted a few years later and small parades sprouted here and there. Tonight at 8PM, Palm Beach Plaza Mall will have a great Carnival Show where you can experience for yourself the taste of Aruba's Carnival culture with the opportunity to take pictures with the majestic

carnival dancers with carnival costumes. Come and enjoy the show! □



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